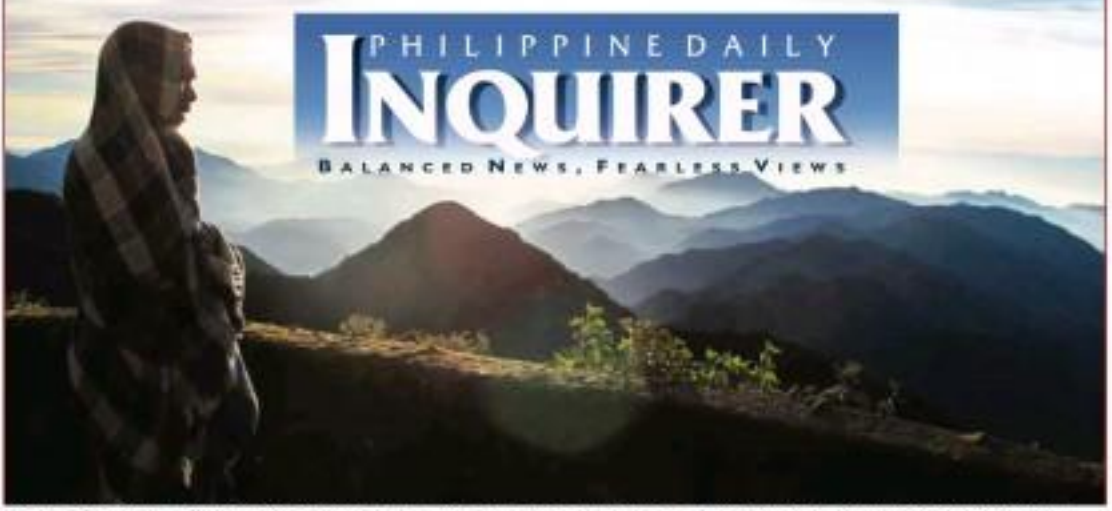
Monday, June 7, 2010 ★★ 15 sections / Vol. 35 / No. 179 P10

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



PEAK MOMENT Daniel Bannat, a 51-year-old resident of Barangay Pula in Bansan, Ifugao, gazes at the sun as it rises over the mountains from the peak of Mount Amuyao, considered to be the 10th highest mountain in the country at 2,700 meters above sea level. Bannat had to trek for eight hours from Pula to guide climbers to Amuyao, which connects Ifugao and Mountain Province. EDCANCIO

Solon hits Nograles for ignoring quorum

Cibac rep says Speaker capriciously didn't see it

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

ADVOCATES OF THE ILL-FATED FREEDOM OF Information (FOI) bill yesterday claimed there were enough warm bodies to form a quorum in Friday's final session of the House of Representatives but that Speaker Prospero Nograles "capriciously" did not see it that way.

Nograles had cited the lack of a quorum to adjourn the session, dooming the bill that would have allowed citizens to obtain official information on state matters, including controversial government transactions, that some officials may want to keep confidential.

Rep. Joel Villanueva of the Citizens' Battle Against Corruption (Cibac) said 137 lawmakers were present in the main session hall of the Batasang Pambansa shortly before the House opened its session, or two more than the required number of 135 in the 269-member House.

Villanueva said this was attested to by Majority Leader Arthur Defensor Jr. and House Secretary General Marilyn Yap in informal talks among a few lawmakers.

Villanueva said he and his fellow FOI backers were preparing to celebrate the ratification of the bill—which had already been approved by both chambers but needed to be finally ratified by

SESSION, A-14

FREEDOM RUN "Running priest" Robert Reyes and former Army Brig. Gen. Danny Lim lead the "Takbo ng Pasasalamat at Kalayaan" at Quezon Memorial Circle. Lim was granted temporary liberty after posting bail on rebellion charges. See related story on Page A6. MATT LEDDA

Refreshed Aquino ready to be proclaimed

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Christian V. Esguerra and Christine O. Avendaño

THE NEXT PRESIDENT IS ready to be proclaimed.

"I'm back and prepared," presumptive president-elect Sen. Benigno Aquino III yesterday told reporters upon his arrival at his family home on Times Street in Quezon City after a six-day break in Tarlac, his home province.

Aquino looked refreshed and relaxed as he alighted from his white sport utility vehicle but remained wary of making any pronouncements until Congress shall have proclaimed him the official winner of the presidential election.

The joint congressional canvassing committee tasked to proclaim the president and vice president is

REFRESHED, A-11

It's official: Rainy season has started

By Nikka Dizon

AFTER A LONG, HOT SUMMER that drove people to seek refuge in air-conditioned rooms, jacking up power bills, they may now bring out their raincoats and umbrellas.

The rainy season is here—and that's official.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical

IT'S OFFICIAL, A-13

'Grim eater' banned in funeral homes

WELLINGTON—A NEW ZEALAND funeral home has stepped in to stop a take restrainer who was attending up to four funerals a week to stock up on food, even filling up Tupperware containers to take home, according to media reports.

GRIM EATER, A-13

For bucking Moro deal, Mar lost in ARMM, says new gov

By Nico A. Alcanabo and Ryan D. Rosario
Inquirer Mindanao

VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE Manuel "Mar" Roxas II lost in Muslim areas, like Maguindanao, not because of dagdag-bawas (vote-padding and vote-shaving) but because of his opposition to the memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain, according to local officials.

On the eve of the May 10 elections, Roxas called up Vice Mayor Esmael Mangudadatu of Buluan town in Maguindanao, who was a gubernatorial candidate in the province.

Roxas sought "help" for the balloting the following day, Mangudadatu said. That "help," he said, was to be in the form of delivering votes for the senator's vice presidential candidacy under the Liberal Party (LP).

"It was too late," he told the senator. "Perhaps, he thought it was that easy to call on top supporters to vote for him."

Mangudadatu, a candidate of the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD, eventually won the gubernatorial race. His wife, sister and aunt were massacred, along with 32 media workers, in November last year, allegedly by the powerful Ampatuan clan

FOR OPPOSING, A-12

Right, Left swamp Noy with advice

By Amando Doronila

SEN. BENIGNO "NOYNOY" Aquino III, who is due to be officially proclaimed the 15th president of the republic this week, faces an avalanche of unsolicited advice from several quarters, including the outgoing administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, concerned do-gooders in civil society and Left-wing groups who have entered the mainstream of parliamentary liberal democracy disguised as party-list lawmakers in the House of Representatives.

ANALYSIS

The pieces of advice comprise

RIGHT, LEFT, A-4

Retiree sponsors PDI learning center

By Ephrain Aguilar
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SORSOGON CITY—IN A VILlage named after its natural springs, her generosity gushes forth for poor children thirsty for learning.

Browsing through the pages of the Inquirer, Rosalia Laguerta-Fuerte, a recently retired government worker, found a way to help some 300 pupils of carb-strapped Bacalbacalan Elementary School.

She set aside part of her retirement money to sponsor a daily supply of newspapers

RETIREE, A-9

IT experts list sins of Comelec, partner

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE HOLDING OF AUTOMATED elections on May 10 was "mismanaged" because the Commission on Elections (Comelec) and its technology partner, Smartmatic-TIM, did not follow technical requirements, including security features, mandated by the automation law and the terms of reference of the bidding for the automated system.

The Philippine Computer Society (PCS) issued this assessment on the eve of the expected proclamation of the new president and vice president.

"These are grounds to doubt the accuracy and integrity of results. *We don't know* whether [the vote count] accurately reflected correct ERs (election returns)," PCS director Edmundo Casiño said in an interview with the Inquirer over the weekend.

Asked point-blank if, from the point of view of information and communication technology

IT EXPERTS, A-13

PHILIPPINE Computer Society president Nelson Celis (left) and director Edmundo Casiño. PHOTOS BY RICHARD REYES

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

JPE now says GMA can extend Bangit

By Christine O. Avendaño

IN A SURPRISE TURNAROUND, SENATE PRESIDENT JUAN PONCE Enrile said yesterday that President Macapagal-Arroyo could extend the ad interim appointment of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Delfin Bangit if she so desired and indicated that he favored an extension because it was the better course of action at this time.

Enrile further stated that those questioning the legality of a possible re-appointment of Bangit should just go to the Supreme Court.

The Senate President's latest statements were a reversal of those he made last week, when he said that Bangit should relinquish his position as the vice chief of staff because Congress had adjourned last Friday without Bangit being confirmed by the Commission on Appointments (CA) which Enrile chairs.

Congress was not able to take up Bangit's nomination because he was appointed by President Arroyo on March 9 when the late, she said the House went on a break for the election campaign.

Enrile had said that President Arroyo could no longer reappoint Bangit because she was prohibited by the Constitution from doing so until her term ends on June 30.

But speaking over dzBB radio yesterday, Enrile clarified that Bangit was not bypassed by the CA, unless the latter's not to issue appointment had "lapsed" with the adjournment of the 14th Congress.

"Even if we wanted to confirm [Bangit], it was impossible as [it was] a matter of time for us to do it," he said, noting that a lengthy procedure had to be observed before the CA could hold a public hearing on Bangit's confirmation.

"And now it's up to the President if she wants to extend the ad interim appointment of General Bangit," he said.

Addressing yesterday media it clear that President Arroyo would not replace Bangit despite the CA's failure to confirm his appointment.

"The position of the Palace would either be to let the designation of General Bangit as chief of staff shall remain endorsed, I suppose, up to June 30," Undersecretary Eraldo Ferraro, deputy presidential spokesperson, said in the weekly Malacañang hookup.

Enrile said that some people might say that Bangit was a backer of President Arroyo's, but he said that the general was a "professional soldier" and a servant of the people.

"They're soldiers of the Republic, not soldiers of Enrile, Aquino or Arroyo, but soldiers of Juan de la Cruz," he said.

Enrile said he "did not know what they're going to do with him if they sufficient reason [for appointment]."

"That's why I said that if I were president, I will probably extend his ad interim appointment and let anybody who needs to question that go to the Supreme Court and let the SC decide. These are legal issues that were never anticipated by the framers of the Constitution," he said.

Reminded that he himself had said that President Arroyo was now barred from making appointments, Enrile said the high court could better deal with the matter as it was the interpreter of the Constitution.

"You and I and anyone else can not just reject the Constitution with finality but the highest court," he said.

Enrile also contradicted the claim of Sen. Rodolfo Biazon and the military spokesperson that the CA confirmed the rank of a military official, stating that the CA confirmed both the rank and position of an appointee.

He said Bangit was being promoted to four-star rank as chief of staff. "Under the law," he said, "there is only one four-star rank granted and that is the chief of staff."

Enrile also said that regardless of whether Bangit was confirmed or not, he would "carry that rank" of four-star general.

There is who, he said, another position of the incoming president who is who then he could "grant a four-star rank to another guy when there is another holder of a four-star rank in the military." *With a report from* **Christine O. Avendaño**

'Midnight' appointments at PNOC-EC scored

By Amy R. Remo

THE HEAD OF STATE-OWNED PNOC-EC privatization Corp. has urged the outgoing administration to look into alleged midnight appointments in the company, with a new board being appointed allegedly to push for a "fire sale" of its assets.

Gilberto Veranz, acting PNOC-EC chair, said reports in the government-run paper in plans a new board that would purportedly push for the privatization of the government's 10-percent stake in the Malampaya gas-to-power project.

The change is supposed to occur during the company's stockholders' meeting on Tuesday.

According to Veranz, the current board has removed calls to defer the sale of the Malampaya stake and asked the government to wait instead for the results of exploratory drilling in offshore Palawan.

If the drilling yields positive results, the stake would be worth more than P1b billion, he said.

"The sale, of course, all the assets of PNOC-EC, would render the company incapable of fulfilling its responsibilities under its oil service and cost-sharing contracts in the long run and severely hamper its ability to participate in future oil exploration activities," Veranz explained.

The Department of Finance has been trying to privatize PNOC-EC and is looking to raise about P16 billion to shore up government coffers.

"Why pursue the sale too late in the day?" Veranz said.

"The sale at this time can easily be dubbed a midnight sale because the term of the present administration expires in a few weeks and the lack of a public bidding will find suspicion on the motive for the sale," Veranz said.

The outgoing board is composed of Veranz, Rafael del Pilar, Wilfredo Ilickson, Irene Recto, Eduardo Hernandez and Renato Adajaro.

The new board will be composed of Arsenio de Guzman, Christopher Lloris, Jocelyn Alfonso Claire Flaunoy, Guillermo Hernandez, Tess Fergo, Jose Loviere and Alfonso Cruz.

Although listed at the last hearing, PNOC-EC is 99-percent owned by its parent company, state-run Philippine National Oil Co. The remaining one percent is held by the investing public.

ERRATUM

Yesterday, 06 June 2010, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (Government Peace Negotiating Panel for Talks with MILF) paid for a full page advertisement entitling the *Declaration of Continuity for Peace Negotiation between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and Moro Islamic Liberation Front*. Inadvertently, the version published contained errors and omissions that resulted from the re-encoding process in preparing the text for publication. In particular, the first two lines should state "In the name of God, the Beneficent, The Merciful". On the fifth paragraph, there should have been a second bullet point as follows: *"In good faith, building on prior consensus points achieved, these negotiations and their results will proceed on the basis of continuity and courses of action free of any imposition in order to provide the parties definite commitment to their success for peace settlement"*

Right, Left swamp Noy with advice

AQUINO

From page A1

a cacophony of nauseating recommendations of priorities that Aquino is being urged to incorporate into his policies and programs in his agenda for his first 100 days in office. For example, Aquino is asked to "hit the ground running," a words-out cliché to politicos.

The rocking locks of the departing administration, who will soon lose their jobs, are beside themselves pouring a glowing picture of the economic legacy of Mr Arroyo.

Romulo Virola, secretary general of the National Statistical Coordination Board who is known for presenting an optimistic picture of the economy, painted the 7.3-percent growth during the first quarter of the year as "a glorious ending for the Arroyo administration."

Pardo went further to hold up the economic expansion "as a good beginning for the Aquino administration," implying that Aquino would be history saved if he built on the growth for which he should be grateful to his predecessor by establishing a solid foundation for growth.

This is enough reason to effect an update.

More guarded in praise

Independent economists are more guarded in their praise. They have pointed out that the growth was largely fueled by massive election spending, which has also been credited for the 8.5-percent growth during the second quarter of 2007.

According to Benjamin Diokno, budget secretary of the Bolando administration, without election spending, economic growth during the first three months failed to just 3.6 percent—the worst growth rate in three decades.

The election-driven economic expansion fueled by heavy spending has been a specific growth surge that have led to ballooning fiscal deficits, which Aquino would have to confront in the first day of his first 100 days by raising new taxes.

Outgoing Finance Secretary Margarito Teves has warned that the budget deficit that could swell to 4.4 percent of GDP (gross domestic product) if the next administration does not impose new taxes.

Scorched earth policy

In executing a scorched-earth policy to cause his detractors, Mr Arroyo has had a source of bewilderment on the part of the succeeding administration, owing to it that it cannot but fail.

In an interview with local TV stations on Friday, Mr. Arroyo presented a memorandum-like treatise, saying that she would like to be remembered as the architect of a modern economy. "I would like my presidency to be remembered as one that stabilized the economy, did the fundamentals to modernize our economy," she said.

Her aides have positioned Mr Arroyo as a hands-on leader who works late into the night and always only four hours or less projects linking the regions of the country in an infrastructure program.

The program, a welcome deviation, is stymied by her named Scam of the Hutton Administration, the most ambitious and comprehensive blueprint for infrastructure development launched by any president.

Turbulent growth

To a certain extent, it is true that Ms Arroyo has stabilized the economy, but growth has taken place in an environment roiled by political turbulence during the last six years of her presidency, stemming from allegations of the rigging of the 2004 presidential election and a series of corruption scandals surrounding her administration's transactions.

If the public has not appreciated her work ethic, it is because she has followed a flawed model for economic growth that emphasizes pleasing with-out good governance. This model is high-economic planning cannot but short in governance substance.

Aquino has spurned this model, emphasizing that he would launch an anti-corruption drive during his presidency. It is now clear that Aquino has installed Mr Arroyo's unbalanced and flawed approach, giving higher priority to good governance.

Midnight appointees

Ms Arroyo has tried to preempt the first 100 days agenda of Aquino. On the administrative side, she has left a legacy of a coterie of officials whom she appointed as "midnight appointees" in the dying days of her administration and before the induction of the said one.

Among these controversial appointments are Board of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Delfin Bangit, without nomination for promotion to full general was bypassed by the Commission of Appointments last week, and there is a demand from some members of Congress that he step down as chief of staff.

There are no signs that other midnight appointees in the bureaucracy are stepping down in response to public demands.

Less right to dictate

In the ideologically fuzzy alignment of political parties in the country, the Left is in the best sense that ready to determine the agenda of the first 100 days.

The Left has less right to distrust the agenda than the Right. Her down-dominated political establishment and the Center, consisting civil society groups whose ideas of good governance are grounded on electoral reforms.

Without a big electoral number in the last election, the Left, represented by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) that has won representation in the House through the party-list system, has moved notice that it would not observe a "honeymoon" with the new administration.

In a self-important statement out of proportion to its electoral mandate as a marginalized sector in Philippine society, Bayan said it would continue to challenge Aquino "to address pressing issues, institute reforms, and not resort to lawless tactics he would go in making good his promises."

Left's wish list

"There is a certain willingness and openness to engage (the Aquino administration), depending on the issues," Bayan said.

"When cooperation is possible in resolving issues, the Left will not turn their backs. Certainly, our attitude toward Aquino is different from our attitude toward GMA."

Bayan said it had prepared a wish list for the Aquino administration.

Before the Left can be in a position to exert more influence and capacity to make demands, it should reconsider what it made of its impressive show when it boycotted the snap presidential election that culminated in the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution, seeming it as a reactionary bourgeois exercise.

The result was that the Left was marginalized from political participation for a long period of time until the party-list system was adopted to open the way for parliamentary participation by marginalized sectors.

The Left is speaking with a hold voice without a big stick.

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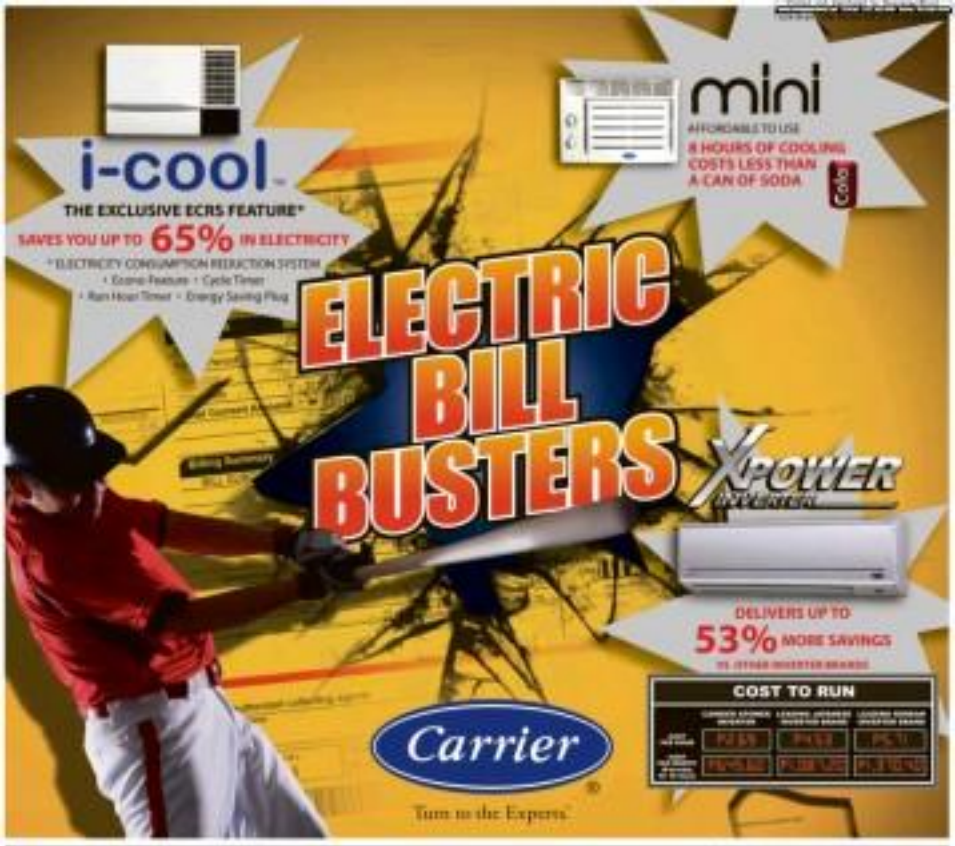
Corrections

IN THE JUNE 6 ISSUE, an article on Page A1..."Marina honors OFWs"...misstated the date when Migrant Workers Day is celebrated. It is celebrated on June 7—not June 6.



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Ex-putschist sees no coups in Aquino administration

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE IT FROM this ex-putschist, coup attempts under the new administration will be far-fetched.

Former Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim said he sees only bright prospects for the six-year administration of incumbent President Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, one bereft of military adventurism similar to what occurred during the terms of his mother, the late President Corazon Aquino, and subsequently President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Lim, who ran for a senatorial seat under Aquino's Liberal Party (Lp) ticket, participated in six of several coup attempts against the elder Aquino in the 1980s and now stands accused of plotting to overthrow the incumbent in 2006.

Our out-half to consultation with the February 1986 coup attempts. Lim based his prognosis on what he called the "inner circle of goodwill from all sectors, including the military" for the new Aquino administration.

With a load of more than five million votes over former President Joseph Estrada in the official congressional canvass, the younger Aquino is set to be proclaimed the country's 15th Chief Executive.

"Definitely, the prospects are good for Noynoy," Lim told the Inquirer in a phone interview. "He enjoys a good mandate from the people."

Asked about possibilities that coup attempts would be furthered under an Aquino administration, he said: "That's true, that's true."

Lim said part of the reason was Aquino's term is expected to be starkly different from that of his predecessor. He said that in the Arroyo administration, the military was used to cheat in elections.

"This administration has hit rock bottom in terms of credibility and the people's regard. A Noynoy administration will definitely be better than the current administration," said the former military officer who has been retired.

He said Aquino "does not have to do much" to perform better than the Arroyo administration. "Even a chimpanzee can do better."

Despite losing, Lim said he would still be willing to work for Aquino if given the chance. He said he had received news that he would be tapped later on. Losing candidates cannot be appointed within a year of the elections.

In the meantime, Lim said he would help the incoming president by marshaling his back.

"I'm no longer with the military, for whatever influence I still have, I will use that to help [her] all circumstances," he said.

Fund misuse in peace czar's office probed

IMARO CITY—PEACE ADVISER AMIHAMILLE Abaya disclosed over the weekend here that the Office of the Presidential adviser on the Orang Persons (OPAPP), the Commission on Audit and the Office of the Ombudsman had joined hands to investigate the misuse of about P170 million in OPAPP funds before the assumed office in November last year.

Abaya said the money, which came from the Office of the President, was apparently allocated for unnecessary bonuses and benefits for OPAPP officials and personnel. She said the investigation also uncovered unliquidated funds for OPAPP's social integration program.

Abaya was here Saturday as the guest in a peace forum attended by representatives of government agencies and nongovernment organizations in the Cordillera.

She said several directors and an assistant secretary whom she did not name, were among those dismissed from OPAPP for their involvement in the misuse of funds.

Abaya said directors "shocked, pained and scared" when she discovered the anomalies in the funds and she lived in constant fear from OPAPP when she took over.

"We cleaned up OPAPP because it has an important role to play [in the government's peace efforts]."

"The problem of corruption in OPAPP was disappointing...But these were the things we had to face, We had to be transparent although what happened was really disappointing," she said.

"We were not ashamed of our decision. Because of what we did [to clean up the mess], vehicle ang galaing at dating[ng chanyas [the campaign and respect for the agency] was restored," she said.

With the housecleaning, Abaya said OPAPP had been transformed and was ready for a smooth transition to the appointee of the next administration.

She said she would leave OPAPP with about P100 million in its coffers that could be tapped by the next administration for social integration projects and other peace-building efforts.

"What's what we have been through, it is important to note that these peace development. I was here for only eight months and yet we have introduced a few reforms. We have to focus on the 8 months and not efforts to rebuild the OPAPP," Abaya said.

She said OPAPP under the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, had a series of dialogues and peace negotiations with communist rebels and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

OPAPP also held a series of dialogues and consultations, called "Bukspan Mindanao" in 13 regions and key cities from February to March to present the progress of the government's peace negotiations with the MILF.

Rosevelyn Cabisa, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Gov't, MNLF agree on way to fund dev't

THE GOVERNMENT PANEL AKS THE MORO National Liberation Front (MNLF) have agreed to create a funding system that would spur economic development in Mindanao while both parties continue to work on a final peace pact.

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Annabelle Abaya yesterday said that both groups met in Surabaya, Indonesia, last week to finish out the mechanism for the Bangsamoro Development Assistance Fund (BDAF).

"The panels focused on two common points—(1) set up and support a fund mechanism to pursue economic development and (2) undertake a (tripartite) process structure to monitor the security, governance, economic activities, including the delivery of social services in the conflict-affected areas," Abaya said in a statement yesterday.

The establishment of the BDAF was part of the memorandum of understanding, which both parties initialed on Aug. 5 to 22 this year at the Tripoli, Libya—an accord witnessed by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Under the terms of understanding, both parties consented to work on the implementation of the final peace agreement reached and signed on September 1996.

The creation of the BDAF was initiated by Executive Order 872 which President Macapagal-Arroyo signed in March to serve as a major mechanism of the ongoing tripartite review of the peace agreement to access and channel funds from the OIC.

The OIC is an association of 57 Islamic states, with a permanent delegation to the United Nations, that promotes Muslim solidarity and safeguards Muslim interests worldwide.

Abaya said the BDAF would also allow for the funneling of funds from the OIC's special bodies, member countries and official and institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank, for the development and rehabilitation of Mindanao.

The BDAF has an initial funding of P300 million from the President's contingency fund.

Jocelyn R. Ga

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Turn to Section T

NURTURING THE SEEDS OF DEVELOPMENT

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With the aim of making its services more accessible to clients and development partners in Western Leyte, DBP moves its Ormoc branch office to a more convenient location while committing itself to continuing its assistance to this flourishing city.

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Int'l groups call for release of 'Morong 43'

By Jerome Aning

A COALITION COALITION ATTENDING the annual session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Switzerland has appealed for international support in the campaign to free the so-called "Morong 43," a group of health workers arrested in February by the Philippine military in Morong, Rizal province for allegedly being communist rebels.

The Ecumenical Voice for Peace and Human Rights, in a statement from Geneva, said Eric Sarmo, secretary general of the World Organization Against Torture, and Renato Reyes, representative of the World Alliance for Citizen Participation, both lauded calls to free the Morong 43.

Both said that while the Philippine government would be accepted representatives from the international community like the UN, it remained to be seen whether or not it had the political will to implement those recommendations.

Reyes said the group would continue to link up with other organizations around the world to work for the release of the detainees.

"The Morong 43 case is emblematic of human rights violations occurring in the Philippines. The plethora of violations at every step of the way, the various legal shortcuts, the blatant abuse or total disregard of the law and the deliberate attempts to escape accountability are symptomatic of an overall impunity in the Philippines," one of the group's members, human rights lawyer Edre Olalia, said in a statement to the UNHRC session.

Also speaking at the event was Renee Clamor, husband of one of the detainees and deputy secretary general of the Philippine human rights group Karapatan.

Clamor said his wife was threatened with harm if she refused to sign up to being a member of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

He said Rizal town mayor Alfredo Ubo invited her at the camp were harassed by members of the military.

Olalia and Clamor were among five Philippine delegates sent to the meeting by Bayan-based Union National Council of Churches to the Philippines protest secretary Fr. Rex Reyes, a member of the delegation.

Bishop-rial Voice also quoted Cecilia Quicoseling of the Commission on Human Rights, who also attended the side event, as saying that the military need to account for the Morong 43.

The group claimed to be consulting examiner on mental health care. The military said they were undergoing training in bomb-making.

RP, EU forge new deal

AFTER A YEAR-long negotiations, the Philippine government and the European Union (EU) have forged a partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA) that would boost efforts in political security, human rights, counter-terrorism and migration, among others.

The Department of Foreign Affairs made the announcement on Friday following the seventh and final round of talks between the Philippine and EU teams in Brussels.

Ambassador to the EU Enrique Manalo led the Philippine delegation on the final talks with European Commission officials led by Janez Potocnik of the external relations directorate general.

Comprehensive

Manalo expressed satisfaction over the conclusion of the PCA, negotiations, saying that the agreement would provide a comprehensive framework that would guide the future direction of Philippines-EU relations in the form of mutual benefit.

The PCA aims to further enhance bilateral cooperation in the areas of political-security, human rights, counter-terrorism, trade and investment, development, education and culture, energy, transport and migration.

Manalo said an earlier cooperation agreement signed in 1980 had been deemed "outmoded and insufficient" to address current challenges and opportunities for the Philippines and the EU.

21st century

He said there was a mutually recognized need to update that agreement to raise the level of cooperation between the two parties in the context of the 21st century.

"I believe the PCA provides an opportunity and basis for the Philippines and the EU to work closely together in addressing real challenges such as the global financial crisis, migration, the pursuit of development goals, expanding trade and investment, promoting development cooperation and promoting international peace, security and human rights," Manalo said.

Since 2006, a series of interparty consultations had been held in Manila to consider a possible agreement proposed by the EU. Jerome Aning

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Cheaper, bigger bread coming, say bakers

EXPECT BIGGER LOAVES de sal and sharper loaf bread on your breakfast table as flour prices continue to fall, according to the Philippine Baking Industry Group Incorporated.

Philbaking president Walter Co yesterday said bakers had started cushioning the price of loaf bread by 50 centavos after the price of a sack of flour went down by P20.

Co said that for every P50 a bag decrease in flour prices, the price of loaf bread could drop by 75 and a 10 piece pack of pan de sal by 50 centavos.

The Department of Trade and Industry had said that flour prices should bear the same levels as in 2005, or at P610-P625 per 25-kg bag. A sack of flour is currently priced at P750.

Using the DTI's projected price recession, the price of loaf bread could go down by P5, Co said.

But since small bakeries are not inclined to lower bread prices, he said the public could look forward to bigger pan de sal and more slices of loaf bread, documents f Andrade

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Real-life Indiana Jones previews exploits for Pinoys

By Cora Lucas
Entertainment

BETA CROSS BETWEEN FICTIONAL film characters Indiana Jones and Jason Bourne—except that his adventures are for real.

Like the daredevils played by Harrison Ford and Matt Damon, visiting travel journalist explorer Oliver "Ollie" Steeds has a penchant for globe-trotting exploits.

He has traveled to more than 100 countries and led expeditions in several of them—Mongolia, Mauritania, Niger, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, China, Syria, Jordan, Papua New Guinea, as well as the Amazon, among others.

"In his explorations, Indiana Jones is famous for discovering things, stealing stuff and getting into trouble," says the 35-year-old Steeds, who arrived in Manila Friday to promote his new Discovery Channel documentary "Seeking History with Ollie Steeds."

"But, of these—discovering things and getting into trouble—I can very much relate to. And Jason Bourne, like me, has great survival skills."

7-part historical docu

Steeds, who is on the second leg of an Asian tour, showed snatches of his seven-part historical documentary in a press launch Friday at the Bale Roxlifted Science Discovery Center at SM Mall of Asia. A pastime of the series became a smattering of expressions of meeting secretly with smugglers and bribing customs officers in search of relics, courtesy of Steeds' hidden camera.

A graduate of Dudley College in London, Steeds is founder of INTREPID, a nonprofit that "works to promote exploration as the basis of our progression." As an investigative journalist, he has covered wars, environmental affairs, human rights, indigenous peoples, politics and development.

Steeds says he has done, and will do, anything for a good story. Live footage of him crossing the Gobi Desert, 800-kg accumulator marvelous across the Sahara. Once he drove around find Square in Moscow in a borrowed limousine to the fanfare of James Bond cash in his pocket up and jailed in Mongolia.

In the episode "Devil's Island," he escapes the penal colony in the French Guiana by jumping across the Maroni River, braving anacondas, caimans and piranhas.

There are no definitive answers to the questions he is trying to uncover, he points out, as they remain riddles to be resolved. "I'm an academic historian looking at the mystery from the outside. A lot of the evidence is conflicted. But I challenge the experts. Where is the end of the road?"

In his entire passion, Steeds is on the case of the mysterious disappearance of the Ark of the Covenant, the golden chest that was home to the Ten Commandments and witnesses the route taken by the religious artifact that disappeared over 2,000 years ago.

Steeds also goes on a quest to resolve the paradox behind the Bermuda Desert's Nazca Lines, the stone behind El Dorado, Nazi Germany's hidden treasures, Hitler's many hideouts, the hidden city of Atlantis, one of the notorious and vicious Devil's Island prisons.

Among the episodes, Steeds got his adrenaline rush in the "Lost City of Gold," which he considers "a great journey rooted in culture and history."

Courting danger

He says he discovered something new when his team followed the El Dorado trail along a road of ruins into the remote Andes Mountains in South America. "I believe there are still lost cities to be found hidden in the jungles."

The series will air Mondays at 9 p.m. beginning June 28 on the Discovery Channel.

The explorer admitted courting danger in his ventures, to the point of having snowblade polling gear on him. He also confessed to going undercover at certain times to protect his cover and get his subjects to talk and have the interest.

"Sometimes we have a big crew with us but other times we make our team down if we need to go on dangerous areas," he says.

"Into the West Bank in Palestine, for instance, I had to come in with just my cameraman. We were in and out. It was good because we spoke Arabic and he was very good in operating in that kind of environment. The key here is to operate in small teams so you keep a low profile."

Steeds says he discovered the explorer in him at the age of 6, the same time he learned to ride a bicycle. "I made a ramp out of a stupid child so I climbed up a tree with a bitch to see what would happen," he related. "I landed on the ground with the brick hitting me on the head. I realized up with a big scar."

Youngest leading explorer

His "luck and the Steeds" experiences only piqued his curiosity. Years later, he would be the youngest among 50 of the world's leading explorers featured in the book "Faces of Exploration," with the likes of such luminaries like Buzz Aldrin, Dr. Jane Goodall, Sir Edmund Hilary, Jean-Michel Cousteau and more names.

During his two-day visit, Steeds conducted a documentary photography workshop at the Bale Roxlifted Science Discovery Center, which hosted the event. The activities museum has just forged a partnership with the Discovery Channel to bring dynamic personalities in the field of science to the museum. The center's next expected guest: astronaut Buzz Aldrin, the second man to walk on the moon.

Steeds, who was in Manila for the second time, considers his new TV series a bounty hunter of sorts. "I always say, 'Unleash the explorer in you.' We all have something we need to learn. And it's all right to make mistakes. We made a lot of them in the show and viewers will get to see them in the making of the series."

Asked what Philippine mystery he would like to attempt to solve, he cited a rivalry between "The new beloved Imelda Marcos' shoes."

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ETHEOS: Intrigued by Steeds's shows

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Gospel: Mt 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. He sat down and his disciples gathered around him. Then he spoke and began to teach them:

"Fortunate are those who are poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Fortunate are those who mourn; they shall be comforted. Fortunate are the gentle; they shall inherit the land. Fortunate are those who hunger and thirst for justice; for they shall be satisfied. Fortunate are the merciful, for they shall find mercy. Fortunate are those who are pure in heart, for they shall see God. Fortunate are those who are persecuted for the cause of justice, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Fortunate are you, when people insult you and persecute you and speak all kinds of evil against you because you are my followers. Be glad and rejoice, for a great reward is kept for you in Heaven. This is how they persecuted the prophets who lived before you."

Commentary:

Blessed are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them.

When I realize that the spiritual life is a process of growth and a product of time, I stop looking for instant and miraculous. It gets me to embrace God's slow pace in my life.

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It's official: Rainy season has started

From page A1

Services Administration (Pagasa) yesterday said the rainy season had begun after a scorching summer that saw the mercury spike as high as 39 degrees Celsius in some parts of the country.

Pagasa chief Prisco Nilo said that for May alone in the past week, worth of heavy rains around the country had been monitoring the amount of rainfall induced by a low pressure area and a monsoon trough.

Pagasa warned to save if the station would be able to record 10 millimeters of rainfall—the criterion that would determine whether the rainy season had officially started.

Yesterday Pagasa evaluated the results. "Nine out of the eight weather stations were able to comply with the criterion," Nilo told the Inquirer by phone.

In a statement, Nilo said the developments of low pressure systems—also known as heat lows—in the southern part of mainland Asia that linked with the low pressure area near northern Luzon had generated and sustained the southwesterly winds in the country, dumping rains for days especially in the western sections of the country.

"This development signals the onset of the rainy season in the first week of June in areas under Type 1 climate, which covers the western parts of Luzon and Visayas," he said.

The rainy season, sometimes with the southwest monsoon, is expected to last until the end of September.

Monsoon breaks, or periods of no rain, for a few weeks are also expected even if technically the rainy season is here.

Flash floods

"With the increasing probability of the occurrence of La Niña beginning on the third quarter of this year that can result in above normal rainfall, residents in low-lying areas and near mountain slopes are advised to take precautionary measures against possible flash floods and landslides during periods of heavy rains," Nilo stressed in the statement.

At 2 a.m. yesterday Pagasa monitored the low-pressure area to be 140 kilometers north northeast of Laoag City.

Nilo said a monsoon trough, or an extended low-pressure area, continued to stretch across Luzon, bringing rains.

He said that while there would be rains this week, a reduced rainfall was forecast as the developing low pressure area had been monitored by Pagasa.

"So far, that's what our models show, but that could still change," he said.

Cooler temperatures

Nilo said the temperatures was expected to dip following last week's daily rains.

On Saturday, Metro Manila recorded a 32.2-degree temperature, computed as the 37-degree temperature the capital endured during the summer.

Pagasa's forecast indicated that northern and Central Luzon would experience cloudy skies with occasional rain showers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over extreme northern Luzon. This could mean flash floods.

The rest of Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with cumulonimbus and thunderstorms, while Visayas and Mindanao will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mainly in the afternoon or evening.

"Moderate to strong winds blowing from the southwest will prevail over Luzon and the coastal waters will be moderate to rough. Light to moderate winds blowing from the southeast to southwest will prevail over the rest of the country with slight to moderate seas," Pagasa said.

IT experts list sins of Comelec . . .

From page A1

(ICT) experts like PCS members, rigging of votes could have occurred on May 10. PCS president Soliver Celis said: "Computers are programmable."

He cited as example a normal cellular phone whose ring tone could be changed anytime by the user. "It may happen," Celis said.

All doubts about the integrity of the results of the polls should have been assuaged if only the Comelec and Smartmatic complied with the provisions of the automation law and the terms of reference of the bidding of the automated election system (AES).

Sins

Celis and Castillo echoed off what could be the sins of the Comelec and Smartmatic:

- Too many delays in the preparations. (The Washington-based International Foundation for Election Systems says it takes 15 months to prepare the Comelec had only less than a year, prompting the PCS to warn it that it's already a "suicide mission," but the recommendation of the PCS was overruled by the Comelec due to time constraints).
- Lack of certification attesting to the 99.995-percent accuracy of the system, as explicit requirement under the terms of reference of the bidding. Dennis Hilomen, chair of the Comelec technical evaluation committee, said last week that there was such a certification from Systest Lab Inc., but it called for compliance with so many "compensating controls," which were not implemented by the Comelec. (The PCS said).
- Removal of security safeguards such as digital signatures (replaced with iButton keys and OS features) and AV security mechanisms (replaced with DV scripts).
- Failure to have an independent review of the "audit source code—and whether the source code used by all 76,000 precinct-count optical scan (PCOS) machines was the same one tested at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Celis and Castillo pointed to the documentary film "Hacking Democracy," produced in the United States to check the accuracy of the PCOS machines. It has been posted on YouTube under the name title. Heard on the film, "watching of votes can happen," Celis said.

- Late-filed testing and sealing.
- Lack of quality assurance in any changes in the AES.
- No full manual audit, but only for election protests were audited (president, vice president, congressman, governor and mayor).
- No certification of the system. Inquirer.net dubbed consolidated canvassing system, which starts from the PCOS transmission of results to the national canvassing.

As early as last year, the PCS had been asking Comelec to implement changes in the system, but nothing happened.

In a letter to the Comelec on May 13, the PCS sought an immediate meeting with the poll body many about the implications of the recently conducted polls.

"It is our intention neither to discredit the Commission nor favor any political parties but rather to assist the Commission to enhance the transparency and acceptability of the election results," Celis said.

The meeting did not materialize, but Celis appeared as ICT resource person in the national canvassing of votes for presidency and vice president by Congress at the Batasan Pambansa two weeks ago.

Audit of CF cards

Castillo called on the Comelec and possibly Congress, sitting as the national board of canvassers, to order an audit of all CF cards, which contained software codes and configuration files that were used in the scanning, counting and transmission of the election results.

The CF card is one of the most critical components of the AES because it "controls access to the sensitive PCOS functions, generates how the PCOS machines will read ballots and calculates the ballots and directs the transmission of results," Celis said.

As shown by the film, CF cards can be tampered with individually, contrary to Smartmatic's pronouncements, said the two PCS officials.

"[Audit on audit log to check all data stored by all CF cards, the country would have zero government officials although "we don't know who voted (for them)," Castillo said.

Too much intervention

Celis explained that what was evident in the conduct of the AES was that the electoral environment allowed too much human intervention...the very evil which the automation law had sought to destroy to end decades of shameless fraud under the antiquated electoral system.

He pointed out "errors or inaccuracies" as a result of the failure to comply with the safeguards.

Castillo said that the PCS—in coming out with this negative assessment of the conduct of automated polls—was only "qualifying the statements (already) said ... to the extent of a technical evaluation."

The PCS said it was willing to be a resource person in any legal proceeding in the aftermath of the elections.

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Refreshed Aquino ready to be proclaimed

From page A1

sit in tomorrow's session that week.

"We will try [today]. If not, the latest will be Tuesday. Nothing will hold them (the last two certificates of canvass), and both [the next president and vice president] will be proclaimed. That's our view," said Speaker Prospero Nograles in a text message.

Senator Presidente Juan Ponce Enrile shared Nograles' view that the next president and vice president would be proclaimed tomorrow.

But Senate Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri who is more conservative, stating that the proclamation may happen as the earliest on Tuesday under the latest on Wednesday.

Despite a highly contested vice presidential race against Aquino's own running mate, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay is looking forward to a six-year working relationship with Aquino.

Binay's spokesperson Lito Atienza yesterday said Congress should jointly proclaim Aquino and him "to things will begin to settle down and we can begin to work."

"The job of the president and vice president is not a job for two leaders of the country to make jokes. The most important thing is purpose, the future," Atienza told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

Even Mahkeling reiterated and it would of the next president and vice president proclaimed at the same time.

Joint proclamation

Zubiri said the canvassing committee had decided that the proclamation of the new president and vice president would be done jointly and not separately.

Aquino's lead over closest rival, former President Joseph Estrada, is more than 5 million votes.

Binay's camp is confident that he will be proclaimed winner despite a relatively thin margin of some 644,000 votes over Roxas.

Binay's lawyer, Aquilino Pimentel III, earlier said the lead was expected to balloon to more than 700,000 votes once the remaining certificates of canvass (CoCs) were canvassed today.

However, said Binay's "movement" with Aquino would translate into a harmonious working relationship between the two top leaders within the incoming years.

"It's really better for our country if the president and the vice president are in good terms," he said.

Atienza described Binay as a "team player" who would be able to work with whoever won in the presidential race. "Whoever the president is, he can sleep soundly at night. Vice President Binay will not [go] against him," he said.

Despite directed not any court legal impediment to finalizing the vote tally for the top two elective posts.

The canvassing committee adjourned on Thursday with only five CoCs from Davao City, Bacolod City, Maguindanao Province, Eastern Samar and Lanao del Sur [unreserving some] 1.4 million votes left to be tallied.

But before the joint committee proceeds with the canvassing of the final five of the 276 CoCs, it will hold a caucus to decide on the petition of the lawyer for Sen. Mar Roxas to have the "null votes" manually counted.

"We will have to today because we will have another executive session," Zubiri told dzBB radio, adding the body would most likely reject the petition of the Roxas camp.

While the canvassing can be concluded today, it would take a while to prepare the committee's report, Zubiri said.

But Enrile, who interviewed over dzBB, said that once the canvassing was completed today, the joint committee would propose the report and then a joint session of Congress would be held tomorrow.

Concurrent resolution

In the joint session, the majority leader of the House of Representatives will sponsor a concurrent resolution proclaiming the winners of the top two elective positions, Enrile said.

"I don't think there would be any problem. It will only take a little time to prepare the concurrent resolution," Enrile said.

He said the winners of the presidential and vice presidential races were expected to be in Congress tomorrow for the proclamation.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is awaiting the proclamation so she can congratulate Aquino and the new vice president before she flies to Shanghai to attend the World Expo tomorrow, Rogelio Bernas, deputy presidential spokesperson, said in an interview over dzBB.

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'Grim eater' banned in funeral homes

From page A1

Jerome Longinotti, director of Rodeo City Funeral Home, told The Dominion Post that the "grim eater" appeared at up to four funerals a week in March and April to enjoy the finger food but clearly did not know the deceased.

The funeral company grew so concerned that it took a photograph of the man, believed to be in his 40s, and distributed the picture to its branches.

"God knows he had a feed at a few [funerals] with many different names. I'm so when people 'funeral' looking, he was stocking up," Longinotti told the newspapers.

He said the man was "always very quiet and polite, and did as the rest of the mourners did in paying his respects."

Longinotti said the man stopped coming after one staff member took him aside and told him he could come to funerals but could not take food home with him.

Tony Cooley, president of the Funeral Directors Association, told the newspaper that such cases happened in the industry occasionally but added it was difficult to stop people from coming, or call them behavior theft because funerals were usually public events.

Eat or else

Australia, however, seems to have a different gastronomic problem.

An Australian restaurateur fed up with the tourist left by diners has ordered her customers to eat everything on their plates for the sake of the costs or pay a penalty and not return.

Chef Yukako Ichikawa has introduced a 20 percent discount for diners who eat all the food they have ordered at Wafu, her 30-seat restaurant in the Sydney suburb of Surry Hills, East describes itself as "grilled-fare Japanese cuisine."

"To encourage people to enjoy a little more of our guests [have eaten] other restaurants," she says in a list of her restaurant's policies that is pinned on the door to the entrys.

This list includes finishing all dishes ordered which are organic and free of gluten, dairy, sugar and eggs.

The chef and her staff tell people who don't clear their plates to discuss another course, not just time.

"Finishing your meal requires that everything is eaten except lemon slices, peel (unless ginger) and seeds," the menu says. "Please also note that vegetables and salad on the side are NOT decorations as they are part of the meal, too."

Ichi's strict policy has been welcomed by some but criticised as overbearing by some reviewers.

Ichikawa is undeterred.

"Wafu is not just a restaurant; it is an extension of Yukako's personal ethos toward nourishment and sustenance," says a statement on the restaurant's website.

"We are not only committed to serving meals that nurture and respect the body but are actively dedicated to the notion of waste prevention, and take extra steps to take responsibility around the environment and sustainability for the future."

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OPINION

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Watching government

THE REPORTED DECISION OF A NETWORK OF Aquino-Roxas supporters to transform themselves from "Runaway Bulacan" to "Nanay Dolorysmar" is welcome. While the Arroyo administration in its nine years in power still has bankrupted our faith in our political system, making us wonder whether we could still function even as a merely presidential democracy, the real task before concerned citizens is substantive:

EDITORIAL We must work to make our democracy responsive to the nation's deepest needs: social justice, good governance, a life of dignity and opportunity for all.

But as the results of their own work in guarding the vote demonstrate, the new anti-corruption watchdogs have their work cut out for them.

The network of supporters, called People Power Volunteers during the '98-day campaign and Aquino-Roxas Runaway Bulacan on election day, is no different from other, equally motivated citizens who organized themselves to protect the vote of other candidates, notably Gilbert Teodoro and Joseph Estrada. (Iris Crissing Mendiola, columnist Antonio J. Montalvan II, on the opposite page, calls it right: Estrada had no legal or moral basis to run for reelection, and the legal system should have forced the issue.)

The difference is that the volunteers' candidate for president won, and by a landslide. If they had given themselves a pat on the back, and then gone back to the tradition of everyday life, they would have followed what other networks of supporters had done before: essentially, left the governing to the candidates they helped elect.

But democratic government requires the participation of all citizens not only during elections, but especially in between-these-periodic polls—Lincoln, for instance, reserved an emphatic part of his tripartite formula for government by the people.

If the very people who had been drawn to campaign on election duty by the renewal of the sense of national pride, the possibility of hope, that was the gift of Cory Aquino's passing on Aug. 1, had then turned their backs on the political process after May 10, then they would have diminished the meaning, the scope, of the same gift.

Wasn't that the lesson the country learned late August, that if we leave the politics to the politicians, we will inevitably come to the same past: scandal-burdened administrations without legitimacy or credibility, alienated from both the people and the people's highest aspirations?

Wasn't that the lesson the country learned late August, that if we think our civic duty is done after we cast our vote or show up at Edsa, we will inevitably come to the same pass: the insanely greedy administrations, ashen at alienating us from our own civil and human rights?

It is only fitting, then, that the network of supporters that lost over 200,000 members since it took to conscious civic work, this time as anti-corruption watchers. (That the network reached this conclusion through post-election reconfigurations is more proof that it is doing the right thing.)

A word, however, must be said about the distressings of the network, in its previous reincarnations as Runaway Bulacan: If the will votes for Sen. Mar Roxas are anything to go by, the scope of vote protection must be redefined, to include voter education. The fundamental principle of "one person, one vote" is misled, if that person's one vote is not properly cast and counted.

What this means is that the challenge of "watching" republics not only making each's presence felt in the country's voting precincts, but also anticipating the many things that can go wrong despite the best intentions.

In other words, a sense of purpose or "a heart that is in the right place" is not enough. Beating Gibraltar members, to give just one instance, must master the intricacies of the budget system, because that is where most of the opportunities for corruption in our infamously corrupt government can be found.

In the same way that non-government organizations mastered the intricacies of international law to finally stop Children dictator Augusto Pinochet, in the same way that environmental NGOs have mastered the intricacies of both the science and the geopolitics of climate change, a network of well-meaning citizens such as Runaway Gilpenco must master the intricacies of government. Philippine style, if the watchdog is to bear good fruit.

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Midnight promotions and a P1.6-B deal in SSS

IT IS THE LAST TWO MINUTES IN THE Arroyo administration and government officials are busy providing for their future. That includes midnight appointments banned by law, appointments of co-terminous officials whose tenure appointments expire at the same time as those who appointed them) to permanent positions, including those of Malacañang consultants and gardeners to positions with fixed terms of office.

At the Social Security System, Administrator Romulo Neri (remember him? the "Yes, may 200 ka dito" kid himself) of the NBN-ITS broadband scandal, and his group are in a scramble to promote themselves before the 2004 administration bows out. The Ombudsman has filed charges against Neri and suspended him but he still holds office and signs documents at the SSS.

SSS is the biggest pension fund in the country, with 27 million members and assets of more than P230 billion. It has 3,000 employees in 115 branches nationwide and representative offices in 17 countries.

Neri has a retinue of people—including bodyguards, police and hangers-on—dogging his footsteps wherever he goes.

In one week, Neri and members of the Social Security Commission were in a rumble to promote selected people, a clear violation of the election ban. Neri appointed members of his staff to permanent positions, displacing long-serving employees.

There have been threats of protest against the promotions and appointments. Several officers filed strongly worded memoranda to Neri, but Neri and the commissioners did not relent. Instead of canceling the promotions and appointments, they promoted those protesting to quell the protests. "One vice president, for example, complained to a commissioner and he now was quickly added to the list of those to be promoted.

For the first time in its 53-year history, SSS promotions became a source of open conflict, some of those promoted to senior positions were new and lacked solid performance to justify their promotions. They jumped over the heads of veteran executives, whom current get much despite their hard work, dedication and loyalty to the institution.

May Grimm, vice president of corporate planning, cited Neri's violations of the implementing Rules and Regulations of the Retirement Plan and the guidelines of the Change Management Team. "The President and CEO [Neri] may be subject to complaints for abuse of authority," Grimm said in her memo.

Neri ignored Resolution 309 of the Social Security Commission to promote nearly 100 branch managers and mid-level officers holding office in charge positions for more than 12 years. Instead, he promoted nine of his senior executives by acclamation.

The SSS unions, in a letter of protest to Neri, said the promotion of employees to vacant positions other than those recommended by the Personnel Selection Board (PSB) violates the "mandate of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to strengthen the merit system in government service."

The unions cited a CSC circular to select only from the top three ranking candidates qualified for appointment. "The PSB selection was done strictly in accordance with the CSC circular."

The unions also said Neri, in his first year in the history of the SSS that the president of the SSS, without prior consultation, overturned the PSB recommendations.

Neri weathered the storm service in the SSS is serious blow by delegating to his nephew, Jaime Echeverria, Jr., broad powers. Hardly a typical assistant to the president and CEO for placed under him are sensitive line departments, including the Information and Technology Management Group, and Personnel and Human Resource Management. Neri violated civil service rules by allowing Echeverria, a co-terminous official, to assume regular departments of the SSS. Officials said Echeverria has no permanent authority with no accountability.

As the Arroyo administration winds to a close, SSS concluded a P1.6-billion midnight contract known as the Unified Multi-Purpose Identification System or UMID. It is expected to produce five million cards at P140 per card to the next five years. Subversive is the brand of the Steering Committee.

The card production was awarded to a consortium of All Card, Xero and Sensiform (that explains!) but officials point out no capital up.

Neri has pounded to Philpost, a bankrupt government agency, the task of enrolling members, which will be done at "capture stations" all over the country. SSS will shoulder the cost of P100/per member.

The deal requires that Philpost put up the stations to capture the fingerprints and photographs of applicants. It means buying expensive machines, computer software and purchasing. The cost could run into billions of pesos. But Philpost is bankrupt. Guess where the money will come from? Answer: SSS, of course, with unconscionable interest. Who's a swindler, dude?

Why is the SSC allowing Neri's shenanigans? One commissioner, whose ally of 2004, is the owner of Yuta Ventures, a realty company that has been reportedly delinquent in paying the contributions of employees, now running up to P76 million.

It is more outrageous that the officials best protected are hands of sensitive departments in charge of investments (Philpost fund), securities trading (buy and sell of stocks), collections (delinquencies) and personnel?

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

Null and void

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

THE LIBERAL PARTY'S CASE IS GETTING CLOSER and professors. Without directly accusing reporter Bitoy of beating Mar Roxas out of his pants, or the vice presidency that's what they're saying.

"How could Mayor Binay have garnered all the votes in one precinct?" asks Butch Abad, noting that in nearly 100 precincts that showed an unusual turnout Roxas got only one vote or none. "It's almost like a historical impossibility to phase that have been scrutinized for vote padding and vote stealing. ... If you recall during the 'Hello Garci' scandal, [it] observed that there were many precincts with a large turnout of votes ... [which] might be a possible indication of vote padding."

Just as well, the Liberal Party wants the null votes, which it says could number over a million, to be counted. "In regions where Roxas was winning—Mimaropa and Central Visayas and the Caraga region—there was a high incidence of such 'null votes.'"

I have no doubt that the MOMO is a place where the vote-declaration irregularities took place, just going by Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani's and Col. Alexander Balutan's testimony at the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal. Has Bitoy set himself get into votes in the place where he stood when he ran for the Constitutional Convention before martial law? Has he probably helped fund them for a relief. Has everything is the product of direct stealing. It is a place famous as the "one person, one vote," but for "one village, one vote," which is really a worse form of cheating as it deals people of democracy. Heyney Aquino's words is cut out for him.

But why should cheating there naturally benefit Binay? Why shouldn't Binay be one of the victims as well? Why shouldn't the cheating benefit Edu Manzano, who was the administration candidate's running mate, or Loren Legarda, who was the running mate of the sickest—and probable ... government-backed ...presidential candidate? Why should GMA, who fear the power to abuse them, anywhere by "Hello Garci," vote herself to make a power saving win?

Some of those promoted to senior positions were new and lacked solid performance to justify their promotions. They jumped over the heads of veteran executives, whom current get much despite their hard work, dedication and loyalty to the institution.

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Neri weathered the storm service in the SSS is

What sends the Liberal Party's logic inaccurate is their credible thrill at one result too much greater and too little. It is so powerful it can get early returns that nobody else has seen, bring the dominant minority party, but it is so powerless it cannot prevent the singling out for victimization of their vice presidential—and at one time presidential—candidate. What's so special about Binay's party to which Bitoy belongs, that it was able to wreak wholesale slaughter in the MOMO?

More than this, if it's true, as Abad says, that we've seen this before during the "Hello Garci" scandal, then why is hell did his party not protest it in the most strenuous terms as under ours it would never happen again? Why did the Liberal Party—and the Piyer Es—not fulminate against GMA cheating PEI out of his panic, or the presidency? Why did Dindy Soliman and the Team Unity instead "If Not Both On Together" just before Cory decided to ask ERS to resign? Why did the Liberal Party not protest the service since it is the time) there only that GMA had lost the moral right to rule without explaining why, an explanation that would have damned them as well, having participated in cheating PEI out of his panic, as the presidency. And now is saying, "Oh ... no ... sorry" afterward.

Things like that come back to haunt.

As to the null votes, they are issues several looking up the meaning of "null" in the dictionary. As one Comelec official rightly and exasperatedly puts it, "How can you count votes that are not there?" As to GMA's fears pointed out, how can you count votes that have not—dashed or before vice president in favor of Roxas?

The Liberal Party's proposition that Binay "null" wins show an unusual concentration of null votes only adds insult to injury. At the least they mystify themselves, proposing that they were powerless to prevent cheating in their own turf. At the most, they insult the people of Western and Central Visayas and the Caraga region, proposing they have known the place for the rest of the country.

Some people have asked me recently if I've been taking the Binay group to task because I'm for Binay. Not at all. I'm not for Binay. I'm for Roxas. Or put less rarely, I'm for supporting the voters' will. I supported Raul Roco in 1998 but had no problems (after "Hello Garci") recognizing FPJ as my president-elect. I supported Raul Roco again in 2004 but had no problems (after "Hello Garci") recognizing FPJ as my president-elect. And, to a demonstrably, you can't even attribute my role to the candidate you voted for. And if, I'd say the same things to Binay Cito it say, heed the voters' voice, bow down to their decision and latch buckle down to rebuilding from the ruins. Heaven knows there's a lot to be done, there's a lot of debris to clean up, and there's a lot of rebuilding.

All the Liberal Party's filibustering can do is mess up the life of their own presidential candidates. Not least by supplying Erap with cannon fodder for his own Lilliputian war. That is nothing compared to the effect on Binay's Aquino of Roxas and Roco's puffing title by suits with Binay or even exercising the title against him in Congress. Heyney will be seen as a party to what the party has done, which will make their claim of the cheating that took place in the MOMO and the Visayas look like a child's prank. Not a good way for a president-elect to unseat on the wings of an unbalanced citizenry to court. It is one thing to be a nuisance, it is another to mess the spirit of Edsa.

Null and void.

Noynoy must do something dramatic

BONGOLUS—[P. SINOPSIS. GAMEBASE Text Ayoda Despista. S. 21.1.9] correctly points out that there are already daunting challenges that presumptive president-elect Noynoy Aquino faces before he can even enter his seat. Alerto, in order to a new president comes in, he or she is seen as a messiah of otherwise more mundane undertaking. Everyone has an opinion, an advice to dispense to the incoming president. Noynoy's famous penchant another Cory Aquino get plopped one time, early dismissing her cabinet with, "I don't want any unsolicited advice." Also, she had rapidly resolved, "Everything is subject to consultation—or, 'when something wasn't getting done committee-style.

Relatively inexperienced and unlisted as a political leader, Aquino rules in the election of his legendary parents—both symbols of resistance and revolutionary change. Noynoy's presidency is coming from one of the most powerful and enduring political dynasties in a hundred years of Philippine history, both presidential Noynoy also symbolizes the shadows of other unpolitical unofficials. Pedro Rivera Sr. and a plagued of "Bulacan Mafia." Their political capability of the younger Aquino generation is reinforced by the reputation of their mother's side, an equally noteworthy elite family whose traditional hacienda wealth has mutated a political pedigree for more than a century. In this, Noynoy is the quintessential "elite" and by those standards of the 21st century. Good is not good enough in leading a country that has vastly overwhelming problems needing "change" a "credible democracy." Yet our Philippine politics cannot continue to perpetuate the social inequality and political malaise that

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

have earned for the country the grotesque of a "weak state," preventing it from moving forward and entering a broader middle class that can sustain credible democracy.

I suggest that Noynoy's greatest challenge is to do something dramatic instead of more "politics as usual." It was a bit disappointing to read that he is forming a committee to decide whether five-thousand Marines will be given state honors as a bi-annual ceremony. It only has learned Dom elections, shadow indications of things to come—in addition will be the remnants of a divisional regime that was seen as culpable in the assassination of Senator's January father? I hope that's not going to be his first official act, for goodness sake.

Cory Aquino's most memorable order when she assumed power in 1986 was to create the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), appointing the respected national icon Jovito Salonga as the first commissioner. The new commissioner's main charge was to recover as much as possible of the billions awards that had been stashed by Marcos and his cronies domestically and internationally, estimated to be between $5 billion and $10 billion. The individual at once the political will to do something about the crimes of the dictatorship. Though the PCGG has not been effective or successful in its function over the years, the cases brought against the dictatorship set many precedents in international law that are still going on.

Now, the "Executive" act that Noynoy can immediately issue is a presidential order to create, as a leader of the people, not the Liberal Party, not the businessmen, not the whole background of power and privilege he was born into. Unfortunately, everywhere, politics always leads to be about power, not people. It is a no-offending taboo you see examples like Fox Morales emerging as the top leader in Bolivia, long founded by economic of healthcare and colonial thinking. Economic thing that can happen in a less developed country as Bolivia, why can't it happen in a modern society as we always claim like the Philippines? Are we still living in the 19th century?

I suggest that Noynoy, since he had already addressed some discussion on this, focus on the Marine issue as an opportunity to demonstrate and bolster a set an example of leadership for social justice. Breaking it up and listening to the people of working at last will be much more dramatic and lasting than establishing yet another commission to investigate what is already known. Even in the terms of decent violence over the years. It's easy to say, "It's not that easy"—the most cop-out excuse used and given, as long as we are stuck in the mentality that security all serves unconditional.

Meaning, by the way, indicated during the campaign that he may not give up his family's rights over Luneta, and that he had been considering them regarding "freeing up their land for the benefit of his needy farm workers" even before he announced his presidential bid on Sept. 8, 2009.

Believe me, as the possible future guest, "put your money where your mouth is." That is a winning formula. As can still be the greatest president of the Republic if he can pull this greatest challenge off: breaking off with his dynastic baggage of centuries past. This is the real "people power revolution" that has another unexplained Noynoy can't go wrong with that.

Belinda A. Aquino is professor emeritus at the University of Hawaii. She is the author of "Politics of Plunder: The Philippines Under Marcos" and other forthcoming publications.

Just in case ZTE-NBN has lost its stench

THE OMBUDSMAN OF THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION reportedly cleared President Gloriapal Arroyo and Neri Colmenares of any wrongdoing in the ZTE-NBN deal. Neri Colmenares said in the aborted $329-million ZTE-NBN deal. For those still short memories, I offer a brief refresher course.

Of all the scams that the Arroyo administration tried to foist on the Filipino people, none equals the ZTE-NBN scandal in terms of greed and impunity. The reported kickback which would have gone to various doers, chairmen and executives is $40 million, or roughly P7 billion, an amount five the PH-

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

gana taxpayers would have had to repay over the years ones, for to that which he paid for the Bolivian nuclear power plant that has but does not delivered a single kilowatt of power.

In terms of impunity, this is how I described the events that took place over the past two years ago:

Her nominee, Rodolfo Tan "Lozada's narration of the abduction—make no mistake, it was an abduction—is eerily back memories of a similar event some 25 years ago. The account of his experiences was almost identical with what took place at the old Manila International Airport in August 1983. As unwitting passengers from abroad descended its armed men who rode no luggage and held him by his arms, leading him out of the arrival tube down to the airport tarmac. Like Ninoy Aquino, Jun Lozada did not go through immigration or customs. But here the similarity ends.

Fortunately for Lozada, he is kept alive and delivered intact for several hours before being brought to La Salle Greenhills to be reunited with his family. He and his story are asked to sign all kinds of statements and reports, basically to justify the Grand Tour which he had been given.

Here, ordinary policemen do not just carry out these things on their own. They are part of something of the whole operation and consumer higher than the conductor is calling the shots. There's the luxury of the cellphone. One can easily keep in touch with "El" and "Ricardo"—whoever they are. This must be part of the growing culture of impunity which the Makati Business Club (MBC), the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (finex) and the Foundation for Economic Freedom (FEF) supported in their newspaper statements some time ago.

Lozada who describes himself as just a "professional financial" must represent a serious danger to the status quo now. Former Sen. Joker Arroyo, former Sen. Jovito Salonga et al. Jobo Gonzalez, the big guns of the administration had all the ammunition to fire against Lozada—good one as much of the case he may have committed as Philippine Rent Corporation president, but of the soldiers power that can be generated instantly to demolish Lozada who stole Applause. The gods, the Greek mythology tells us, blind those they want to, and his demeanor was admitting that he does not want to be given his greatest credibility.

I suggested that in the search for truth, we should collect at some simple questions:

(1) Why would Deputy Executive Secretary Manuel Bamba, himself a member of the Iglesia ni Cristo, approach Atty. Felicisimo—never which he was going to pay to someone his house and which he borrowed from his relatives—to a cellphone wrapper? His collateral, no repayment plan.

(2) If the idea of providing security for Lozada was to endow to protect him, why was he given a Toyota Fortuner Lexus by a disorganized security team that did not appear to know what were the duties they were supposed?

(3) If the idea was to help him avoid testifying in the Senate—assuming that Lozada did not wish to do so—wouldn't that be called "obstruction of justice"? This seems to be similar to the case of Jun de Dominis who was summoned by the Senate to testify on missing fertilizer funds. Instead, Dominis was allowed to leave the country thus avoiding the Senate committee of Sen. Jun Magsaysay.

* * *

In the years of the Arroyo administration, the Filipino taxpayer lost P1.3 billion in an election computerization deal under Technocrat Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos. Incidentally, Abalos is also a member of the Iglesia ni Cristo.

In the Mega Pacific case of 2003, the Comelec awarded a contract for the supply of automated counting machines for the 2004 elections to Mega Pacific Consortium. Five individuals and entities garnered the award, however, the Comelec chair, Mr. Abalos, rejected the payout and declared that the award would award up to the second runner-up. Unfortunately for Abalos, upon elevation of the case to the Supreme Court, the award was set aside by a vote of 9-6 declared the contract between the Comelec and Mega Pacific null and void. (It is interesting to note that of the nine justices who voted to invalidate the award only two remain in the Supreme Court: Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio and Justice Teodoro Casino Bersoles. Of the five who were of the opposing view, one is still with the Court—Chief Justice Reynato Puno.)

In its decision penned by then Associate Justice Antonio Pangalinan, the Supreme Court directed the Office of the Ombudsman to "determine the criminal liability, if any, of the public officials and employees private individuals, if any, involved in the subject resolutions and contract." It also directed the Office of the Ombudsman to "take immediate steps to preserve and safeguard all records and documents in the ill-effects of the illegal disbursement of public funds..."

To this, no one has been prosecuted and punished, and no public funds have been recovered.

The Filipino former lost P726 million in fertilizer funds that was allegedly utilized for political objectives in the 2004 elections. The suspected mastermind, Agriculture Undersecretary Jocjoc Bolante, fled the country and remains missing to face the face of supposed threats on his life from the New People's Army (NPA). In the last elections, he lost his bid for governor of the province of Iloilo.

So far, no one has been prosecuted and punished.

Prior to the Arroyo administration, the Armed Forces of the Philippines lost more than P5 billion in unreconstructed funds from the Marcos era. Of the rule of Fort Bonifacio, Ret. single military officers, retired or active, can attest as to how the money was spent.

It simply considered into this air.

No one has been prosecuted or punished. Each time I come by the Global City I am reminded of this mystery that has never been unraveled.

Is it any surprise that we continue to have scams such as the ZTE-NBN project?

Until we get beaten rules will lead by example, who say enough is enough, and back up their words with strong or even harsh actions, we shall continue to suffer from the cycle of greed and corruption which has plagued our country for aeons.

Boy, Ogie and Dingdong

DEDICATED TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS (AS) BOYET PEARCE, the dimensions came from the presidential president-elect himself. It would appear now that Senator Aquino is a man who does not have deep pockets.

Red rose hopes for an agenda of change. Aside from having his boss Jun Diaz Lindy Soliman and the Team 18, the campaign Cabinet is all-filled by personalities not on the basis of what he had promised would be a government of meritocracy. In fact, it would be traditional politicians, and that is something many of you do not expect of a Noynoy Aquino presidency. his appointments will be hailed on politics. That is expected in the old system he had been floating in to till time during his long period of the spectacularly antiquated caucus-gang as cut on his bold Congress.

Quality issues of ex-Senate de Manila diplomat and student's conduct in international diplomacy notwithstanding, we don't expect that all the appointees of this Aquino is run-to-corners. When Hugo and Facebook communities spread word of dissent as a possible "ambassador" and flies in attending to "re-discover Mindanao," there are reasons to be a few stones. People's expectations are high and what not.

Well, not only on that high, expectations now appear to be overwhelming the real motifs of Aquino. Boy Abunda will neither be ambassador nor chair of the Digood Media Board, but secretary of tourism. Ogie Alcasid and Dingdong Dantes are "just entertainers." His Government is, to use that term-

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

loosened all-too-engaging idiom of Abraham Lincoln, of, by and for the people. Entertainers, all things being thus equal, are on the same par as lawyers and technocrats. No problem with that.

But, can Ogie and Dingdong really emulate Erin Aquino's circle of stars and cliques? Our reading dictionaries—or dear—that the Noynoy campaign was groomed with Erin Aquino's favorite of comedian friends and therefore has to be raised to comedy to fault in the traditional and undisciplined entertainment. Perhaps something could not seem to "It is Aquino of Despedida." And no, no not our town lovers, as Jun had said. Still are citizens of this republic wanting change, Noynoy voters or not. Elections are over.

* * *

Mind, this seem to down us from saying anything of Bolet Bautista, the representative of the four congressional district of the whole province of Compostela Tangbato to Jose Rizal who Pantao Bautista, Mandaluyo mayor, is a close relative, but husband Angelo Reyes. Bautista is a supporter turn and now Campaign governor, is an old college friend. The island paradise Cloud, was one of only three island provinces that delivered votes for administration candidate Gilbert Teodoro Gazpacho and Bangpet votes the other two in this similar to public. Judged by the Cory phenomenon law, a did Joseph Estrada who was not qualified to run in the last place, who was he allowed to do so?), Gilbert's exceptional qualifications were not enough to snatch the election that left the trail of the phenomenal Cory harvest.

Bautista's presentation at the valedictory session of the House of Representatives last Friday on the Freedom of Information bill was, to say the least, something that smacked of an old boy's club agreement. Even though the proceedings are still in session, we could not help but say that was a living mean agreement reached by the ruling majority powers in the House. The "no quorum—then pronounce" entry taken by a "quorum bell" Speaker of the House Prospero Nograles.

A last-ditch opportunity was unsuccessful by moved by outgoing Speaker Prospero Nograles, now murdered a lame duck by either a factional animosities or an obstacle consideration. Either way, the Nograles House will go down in history—mediocre.

* * *

Studio of Fernando Poe Jr. getting zero votes in 2004 in Maguindanao—maximum fashion—on his attack of a remainder in 2010 automation for no-precinctated candidate Mar Roxas. So, and he is not in Maguindanao. Just as previous column of this, [T "Mirage of Impotent Manhood" called from free hand counted. Gosi was just the tip of the iceberg. Gosi operators apparently are still very much in existence, even without Liliang Bedol. Bedol was so many have guessed over his last automation with technology imported from Filipino clients, but it leaves behind the Gosi operators in Comelec that have become experts through years of electronic results manipulation. Mai Roxas over in Maguindanao? Boko Hussein should be the last one to believe that.

I'm sorry; I may be hindered by blinders. But I live in a city where I strongly believe that the people of an area in Wendel C Bacano (who beat Bobo Fernando in the 2004 mayoralty poll ousted by Ruby who's picked his name was in honest election—I told of that area in Bulacan Mayor Bautista. That parallels my perception of the incredibly unconvincing Jejomar Binay, the former mayor-ruling Bautista rights lawyer whose family own filthy cash, is naturally entrenched. And he will be up-Vice President Pat to fend off Mello Gatchi and MBVAPTR deed Bautista to the people in re-republican-ness.

(Comments to mantahpar_antonio@yahoo.com.ph)

A more balanced Philippines

LET ME TACKLE THE PRESIDENTIAL BY DR. Mark Thompson during the roundtable on presidential candidates at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore on "Charting Clientelism," he approached the recently concluded election from the perspective of the dominant type of politics practiced here, which is clientelism. Coined in the 1970s, the term is familiar to Southeast Asia. The dictionary defines it as "a social order that depends upon relations of patronage; in particular, a political approach that emphasizes or exploits such relations."

In the Philippine context, Thompson characterizes clientelism as involving a broad material or immaterial inducements/entitlements to gain support; personalist networks based on kinship, patronage, vote-buying, coercion and involving personal relationships between politicians. Clientelism, say, can be informally divisive, as seen in the Philippines and Thailand, in economically poor societies both the political players can choose outside the ruling circle, not punished) and the public (and in the form of recognition of politics on a spontaneous or deliberately ignorant).

In contrast to this "politics of the normal," Thompson proposes that what studied in the case, Europe and Latin America, represents a more programmatic and "modern" politics, represented by Estrada and Pilar. These two opposites are tied to classes, or split, the electorate along national lines. These two lend to existing political divisions. These characteristics, in this case by patronage, are most apparent only when there is either a) little, the pull of which can) weak and revolutionary are made. But they can also lead to stability when divisions can end up closely matched, with the winning side in a narrow election having to govern with a strong opposition. Clientelism can also be a source of democratic consolidation and adaptation. By points to Europe and North America, Brazil and Chile, and India and Indonesia as examples.

Before more, according to him, is a "bourgeois" political system, in which the "politics of the normal" is not based on clientelist political networks, and relies on voter appeals on messages like "vote for me because I am good" or "I will not

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

steal"; essentially a promise to govern in the national, not personal interest. Thompson points out that, and Europe and Japan are classes, but is particularly attractive to large, educated middle-class and globalized businesses.

In the Philippine context, a supposed anti-clientelist candidate, Noynoy, was nominated by "Dilaw forces" such as Jesse Robredo, Aquino's maternal great grandfather), Gen. Al Parrs and Jovito Salonga, and invokes the dynamics of questioning the ruling party, as exemplified by Pantai Magsaysay, Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos' presidential runs, and the Defensor-Santiago and Roco campaigns from 1992-2004. Internationally, it's represented by technocrats and their approach to governance. Between the two is a tableau of personalities that, in the end, boil down to Noynoy's opponents.

The problem of course is when the "cure" become "bad"—ones in power, clientelism can become extremely attractive; that is, unless "the educational environment" can be updated, which does have the potential for a "long-lasting democracy." Insuring on the front of combating vote-buying, development-oriented economic policies and improving economic efficiency.

Presidents, on the other hand, rather than being tied to a party, are supposed to transcend them. Even when it's progressive themselves come from the other, they tend to be considers into emphasize popular sovereignty, and who are media-based appeals to continue to a clientelist political system, and to "good governance" messages like "I am like you," and "I will help you."

In the Philippine context this is a more recent line, going back to Ramón de la Rosa's former election and 1964 televised presidential bid, to Imelda Marcos' "iisa pares," passenger jeepney and rolling-store politics in the 1980s, and Erap Estrada's "bong" populist decade from his unsuccessful election in 1987 to winning the presidency in 1998 and his passing in 2000, a combination combining a number of the earlier elements, and with a touch of Ilocano in Thailand's former elected the limitations of populism, too.

But unlike Thailand, somehow in the Philippines, after the decades of Erdie Ent and Tito, society seems to have pulled back from the brink. Thompson attributes this to the ability of Philippine elites to engage in introspection and Arroyo's outgoing the upper and middle classes that had initially supported her. Elections in 2001, 2004, 2007 and 2010 focused public attention on clientelism, effectively compelling political elites to address it, offering compelling points of view for endorsement or rejection by the electorate.

Add to this his belief that the left has found itself unable to "nationalize" the damage populism has done to Philippine politics, which is why Erap's rich-rich Dominguez calls "Dominican bourgeois" nationalist" on one hand, and "millionaires socialists" on the other. And Bernardo Poe is on the other.

The point to be made is that Noynoy will have to negotiate various relationships and their terms on the widespread affluence must contend with the popular demand for economic redistribution in the past, and relieve over-emphasis on development, as well as over-emphasis on democracy, and instead seek a new emphasis on equality-creating efficiency. He needs to balance between the message of the 2010 elections: both have proven undecided constituencies, with a shared commitment to reform, and to overcome the challenges of institutional framework and challenges by means of incentives.

Thompson ends the 2010 polls the "most widely accepted election [since] since 1995," in terms of the procedures. It would, he says, be the long run being a result of a "political system that can lead to "solutions or people power essays," and an era of accommodation by a small elite with the poor majority.

(To be concluded)

Test for midnight nominees

LETTERS

FR. JOAQUIN BERNAS, CONSTITUTIONAL lawyer and professor at the Ateneo de Manila College of Law, cheered Mr. his solution (Inquirer, 5/21): "It's time we may even be talking of the 'midnight appointment' ugly indulged in by outgoing Presidents Macapagal-Arroyo. If the 'offer' and 'acceptance' of the appointments were made before March 10, 2010, then such appointments may pass the constitutional test. Otherwise they become a mere matter of ambitions which, stark and raw, DIRA it usually breeds of.

The usual moves mounted by the Arroyo administration in the face of public outrage against shifts or plain gotcha being appointed to positions of influence and power is that people should not complain about it since, has give them a chance to prove their competence and integrity. Thus, after a year or two, they become more entrenched and almost impossible to get rid of.

Let us be more adept Father Bernas suggests: check all official boards at big banks promising to those appointments. Government appointments follow some rigid procedural. Such processes leave room for shenanigans. Appointments don't just happen overnight or surface out of the blue. It would be interesting to see how many falsifications had been committed in such transactions. It may be that most of such appointees would face jail time, together with the appointing authority!

—STEPHEN L. MONTEVERDE,
dimonsauer@yahoo.com.ph

Hard numbers represent harsh realities

DEPUTY PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESPERSON Gary Olivar may be correct when he said, "here, it's time to talk about hard numbers" (Inquirer, 6/1/10), referring to the latest 7.3 percent GDP growth. But, given the state of the Arroyo presidency (2001-2010), it is necessary to consider other "numbers."

For one, the Philippines is now the No. 1 importer of tax, while—for a change—the No. 1 export of the Philippines. The Philippines is the No. 1 "exporter" of nurses in the world, while 58 percent of Filipinos do not have access to health care. Approximately one out of every 10 Filipinos is an OFW, while 40 percent of OFW families remain poor. The college dropout rate is at 71 percent, while tuition fees increased by an average of 49 percent during the period 2001-2009. One out of every 10 college graduates in the country is unemployed, while 9 of 10 Filipinos in the labor force are jobless or engaged in poor-quality work. The family living wage in PHT (MCR, 2008), while the minimum wage remains at P320. The budget deficit in 2009 soared to P311 billion, while 6 out of every 10 Filipinos live below decent living standards.

Under the presidency of Arroyo, there had been: 1,189 victims of extrajudicial killings and 205 enforced disappearances (data as of end-2009). President Marcos declared Proclamation 1017 in 2006, which placed the country under "state of emergency" and thus, supposedly, arrogated the power to prohibit demonstrations and arrests without warrant a warrant. Even if Proclamation 1017 has long been lifted, in February 2010, 43 lunkhead arrests were illegally summoned and arrested and remain in detention to date.

Moreover, the Arroyo family and their political allies are implicated in several mind-boggling corruption scandals, including the P728-million fertilizer fund scam, the NBN-ZTE deal, the overpriced P1.1-billion Presidential Residence Mandaluyong Boulevard in Pasay City, the overpriced P965-million Hyatt Hotel Pavilion, and the Jose Pidal Boulevard Phase 1 laundering scandal involving at least P32.1 million

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Solon hits Nograles for ignoring quorum

From page A1

the House—but were dismayed when Nograles declared a session "as [he had only] enlisted] 138 representatives to the roll call.

"I think the Speaker decided to do it capriciously to make sure that those will be no ratification," Villanueva told the lawmakers.

'They cheated'

Rep. Majlo Hataman of the Basilan Muslim party-list group, who was listed by Nograles as among those who were either absent or did not answer the roll, said, "I think they cheated in the roll call. I was there. How could I not have been counted?"

Nograles was adamant that there was no quorum.

"The rule is simple. When the roll call is conducted, only those actually on the floor of the plenary are counted for purposes of a quorum. Those who may be in the premises of the complex but not inside the plenary are not counted and considered absent," Nograles said in a text message.

"This is the rule in all parliaments of the world," he added.

Asked, who refused to be identified because of the sensitivity of his post, claimed Nograles and the other House leaders were aware that there was a quorum when they started the roll call.

"But the necessary protocol is the final action in determining a quorum. He can't declare there is a quorum because other congressmen opposed to the POI like Kinamayo Rep. Pedro Romualdo will also question her," the source said.

It was Romualdo who raised the question of a quorum, which eventually led to Nograles declaring that there was none.

Physical presence

The source noted that while it was true that physical presence is considered for a lawmaker to be recognized in the roll call, this was acceptable only in noncontroversial bills, unlike the POI.

"I think the bottom line here is that 240 congressmen voted for this but 6th it was not interpreted, he always finds a way. But if the doors are open it, he has plenty of reasons."

"This is some years of mock guns to waste when only 15 seconds were needed to ratify it," he said.

Villanueva said that by pressing congressmen could be in their offices or in the lounge during a roll call and still be considered present as long as they had given their advice to the secretary general.

"There is none of the hand is considered as being present," Villanueva said.

Disputed list

Nograles came out with a list of 229 representatives who were absent or did not respond to the roll call to prove his contention that there was no quorum. Nograles did not specify who on the list were actually absent and who failed to respond to roll.

But Villanueva asserted he saw at least 20 of those on the list to be actually in the House.

He said they included Reps. Imee R. Marcos, Ilocos Norte; Junie Cua, Quirino; Jacinto Paras, Negros Occidental; Dakila Carlo Cua, Quirino; Rep. Eduardo Gullas, Cebu; Rep. Antonio Cuenco, Cebu; Rep. Pablo John Garcia, Cebu; Rep. Gwendolyn Garcia, Cebu; Rep. Antonio Kho Jr., Albay; Rep. Edcel Lagman, Albay; Rep. Joey Salceda, Albay; Rep. Rodel Batocabe, Bohol; Rep. Erico Aumentado, Bohol; Rep. Arthur Yap, Bohol; Rep. Celestino Martinez III, Bohol; Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, Cagayan de Oro; Rep. Constantino Jaraula, Cagayan de Oro; Rep. Jose Antonio Sy-Alvarado, Bulacan; Rep. Teodoro Bacani, Quezon City; Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, San Juan; Rep. Jesus Crispin Remulla, Cavite; Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr., Cavite; Rep. Abraham Tolentino, Cavite; Rep. Gilbert Remulla, Cavite; Rep. Roy Loyola, Ilocos Norte; Rep. Ferdinand Rodamor, Ilocos Norte; Rep. Rodolfo Fariñas, Ilocos Norte; Rep. Ferdinand Alcantara, Cagayan; Rep. Juan Ponce Enrile, Cagayan; Rep. Jack Enrile, Cagayan; Rep. Rodolfo Antonino, Ilocos Sur; Rep. Deogracias Victor Savellano, Ilocos Sur; Rep. Eric Singson, Ilocos Sur; Rep. Ronald Singson, Ilocos Sur; Rep. Salvador Escudero III, Sorsogon; Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, Surigao del Norte; Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr., Surigao del Norte; Rep. Francisco Matugas II, Surigao del Norte; Rep. Orlando Fua, Surigao del Sur; Rep. Prospero Amatong, Zamboanga del Norte; Rep. Cesar Jalosjos, Zamboanga del Norte; Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, Zamboanga del Norte; Rep. Isidro Ungab, Davao Oriental; Rep. Nelson Dayanghirang, Davao Oriental; Rep. Ruy Elias Lopez, Davao Oriental; Rep. Jose Maria Clemente, Davao Oriental; Rep. Ma. Evita Arago-Manzano, Davao Oriental; Rep. Ma. Lourdes Acosta-Alba

STOP SMUGGLING OF TURKISH FLOUR!

Media reports on pervasive technical smuggling of wheat flour from Turkey are worrisome. It is estimated that at least P50 million in potential government revenues had been lost in 2008 and 2009 alone due to the undervaluation of Turkish flour.

In fact, at least 80 containers of undervalued Turkish flour recently entered the country through the Port of Batangas. The flour shipment was declared as costing only $30 per metric ton or 88 percent lower than the $300/MT average price of imported flour set by the Bureau of Customs (BoC).

We ask:

How can Turkish flour cost only $30/MT when an April quotation for Turkish wheat stood at $225/MT? How can a processed product such as flour be much cheaper than wheat, its raw material?

The Batangas shipment, brought in by a single importer, resulted to foregone government revenues amounting to some P4.6 million.

We demand a stop to the smuggling of Turkish flour, and urge that sanctions be meted out over the apparent inaction of BoC and Department of Finance officials on the matter.

Likewise, we demand that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) make good on its pledge to subject Turkish flour to more rigorous tests after an initial test showed it had traces of cancer-causing aflatoxin.

Pending the result of further tests on Turkish flour, further imports should be suspended immediately.

Senator Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. himself said that our government must not play "Russian roulette" with our people's health and safety as its duty is to ensure that the public consumes only untainted food, in this case bread and noodles free from aflatoxin and other carcinogens.

We ask again:

Just like the small nicotine content of cigarettes which, nonetheless, causes cancer in smokers, would the aflatoxin content of Turkish flour not make our people ill or worse, be stricken with cancer, through the repeated consumption of bread and noodles made out of such flour?

PROTECT the CONSUMERS from CANCER-CAUSING FLOUR.
STOP SMUGGLING and ENTRY OF TURKISH FLOUR NOW!

Antoinette Taus Bergonia

Across the NATION

Flood of free patent applicants seen

BAGUIO CITY—A NEW LAW, WHICH GRANTS free residential land titles for urban dwellers, will draw a flood of applicants from Metro Manila, Cebu, Davao and Baguio beginning this month and the government is unprepared to deal with them, a Land Management Bureau (LMB) official said.

Republic Act No. 10023 (An act authorizing the issuance of free patents on residential lands) took effect this week and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has asked each regional office of LMB to process up to 200 free patent titles this year, said lawyer Allen Sarzona, LMB national director.

"The number may actually triple ... but the DENR is not prepared to deal with [the volume of] applicants. This is how. That's our biggest undertaking," he said.

RA 10023 upgrades old public land laws by granting free titles to people occupying unclaimed and legally unencumbered lots in urban areas, he said.

"The DENR would begin issuing and hiring new personnel next year to cope with the influx," he said.

He said the law would address a backlog in land distribution that had encouraged squatting and brought about legal disputes and zoning problems in Metro Manila and the cities of Baguio, Cebu and Davao.

Squatters who obtained titles would also start paying taxes, which would make up for the profits the government may no longer earn from land sales.

Barring land disputes, most city residents could acquire titles for lands not exceeding 200 square meters in highly urbanized cities and lots not larger than 300 sq m of other cities.

The implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of RA 10023 state that residents of towns classified as first class (annual income of P55 million or more) and second class (annual income of P45 million or more, but less than P55 million) may acquire free land patents for lots not exceeding 750 sq m.

The rules, which were issued last week, grant residents of other towns free land patents provided they occupy no more than 1,000 sq m.

Those cities no longer restrict their powers from selling or transferring them to other people after a five-year period, Barrera said.

This means that the new law would also "stimulate the real estate market," he said.

Alexander Bangoy, a real estate lawyer, said the difficulty of producing land titles in Baguio had often weakened land values artificially. "As a guesstimate of selling lands will weaken real estate sales robust."

But the DENR may have to accommodate Baguio free patent requests with a different set of regulations because of their peculiar land system, Barrera said.

RA 10023 virtually abolished a special land distribution system called the town site sale, which was introduced by the American colonial government.

Baguio and Olongapo City were classified by the American town site reservations, but only this city sells town site lots through a public auction, Barrera said.

Bangoy said each town site sales application (TSA) also gives the right to a surplus and an adjacent portion. This resulted in a backlog of over 8,000 pending applications in Baguio as of March, DENR records showed.

Barrera said Baguio residents may convert their TSAs into free patents application but this would require them to reduce the size of their applied lots. Each TSA covers on average 3,000 sq m. Eleanor Cobreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

DENR lauds prisoners for tree nursery

BAGUIO CITY—ENVIRONMENT officials in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) are launching celebrating World Environment Day in the company of prisoners.

Officials and personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in the Cordillera went to this city's jail on nature 412 humans about biodiversity and the need to plant more trees.

They were surprised when inmates showed them their tree nursery, where almost 1,000 seedlings were being nurtured.

Augusto Lagan, DENR regional technical director for forestry, lauded the prisoners for maintaining the nursery.

He soon inspected the seedlings after inmates presented them with skits that showed the ill effects of smoking, illegal logging, dynamite fishing and improper waste disposal.

"The environment is human's on environmental issues and the permission to have their own tree seedlings must be replicated in all jails in the country," Lagan said.

He said the DENR would provide the inmates with more seedlings to propagate and sell.

Good behavior

Insp. Bernard Bastian, inmate welfare development officer, said it was Ramon Durnal, city information officer, who encouraged the inmates to materialize nursery.

Today, Bastian said, the inmates are growing "ubina," "gmelina," anabucan and pine tree seedlings.

"We hope that someday the inmates would be allowed to plant trees outside the jail. But we know that security measures are the reasons and jail officials for the project to proceed," he said.

Bastian said inmates who maintained true conduct must be given "good time conduct allowance." Under criminal law, deductions are made from prison terms of inmates who they have shown good behavior.

But he said the local officers of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology are not authorized to deduct prison allowances due to good behavior.

"All we could do is recommend [deductions] to the central office," he said. (Jolmar Cordez, Inquirer Northern Luzon)

PRISONERS of the Baguio City jail take good care of tree seedling which they will plant on jail grounds.

Fisherman honored for rescuing dolphin

CITY OF CALAPAN—FOR SAVING a wounded dolphin last month, a Calapan fisherman was honored as an "environment hero" during the commemoration of World Environment Day on Saturday in Silonay Island here.

Randy Cayetino, 38, is the third recipient of the coveted Heroes of the Environment Award, which was created by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to recognize ordinary individuals who have shown decisive environmental action, Gregg Yan, WWF-Philippines communications unit in a statement e-mailed to the Inquirer.

The first two awardees were recognized in January 2009 for saving a "dugong" (sea cow) in Palawan.

Cayetino on May 20 saved a wounded dolphin floating helplessly 10 meters from the shores of Barangay San Antonio.

A SLIGHTLY wounded dolphin beached in a village in Calapan. (Contributed photo by Jun Cayetano, CENRO Calapan)

Deserving

Marilyn Abuenieva, Central Resource Management Program officer at the Provincial Agriculture's Office, said Cayetino deserved the award because he endured the ridicule of a fellow fisherman to rescue the sea mammal.

She said Cayetino' first reaction was fear because he initially thought it was a shark.

"He does not see the dolphin as where he could easily see it and then called the Maritime police officers, who were more likely to dying area," Abuenieva said.

Cayetino assured his colleagues that the best course of action would be to report the stranding to the authorities.

Three hours after the discovery, officials from the Philippine National Police Maritime Office, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Provincial Agriculture Office Fisheries and Coastal Resources Management Division, City Veterinary Office and Inner Coastal's Calapan City Detachment came to treat the fight wounds on the dolphin's snout and dorsal fin.

By 8:30 a.m., the animal was identified as a 2.2-meter female Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin and was readied for release.

"A collective touch canopy over the wounded crowd, but after several more minutes, the dolphin slowly swam off, carried by the tide to better fortunes," Tim said.

"The fight/push is not necessarily the manner to take. Randy can only confirmed a great honor upon his community. He actually saved a life—the greatest gift one can bestow," said WWF chief Malu G. Oliver Jr., also former Department of Energy secretary.

Perez said Cayetino had set a milagrosa example of just what to do when faced with a marine mineral stranding.

"His actions should not just be celebrated—they should be emulated," he said.

Jobelyn Cuenca, program officer of WWF-Philippines, will present Cayetino a plaque of appreciation and P50,000 cash, Abuenieva said.

She said Cayetino did not expect the award, even if he has a big responsibility in raising seven children.

Cayetino' fishing gears include a non-motorized boat and hook and line. He earns P400 on a good day and lives in a shanty on a piece of land not his.

The Sandalang Mangingisda of Barangay San Antonio, where Cayetino is a member, is proud of him, Abuenieva said.

Cayetino redefined the common misconception, "mangingisda lamang sila," she said. Madonna T. Virola, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Probe of overcharging doctors in Capiz ordered

By Felipa V. Celino
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—CAPIZ GOV VICTOR Tanco has ordered a committee to investigate the mounting complaints against the alleged overcharging of professional fees by physicians employed at the Roxas Memorial Provincial Hospital (RMPH) and other district hospitals in the different towns of the province.

In a June 3 administrative order, Tanco directed provincial legal officer Jose Villanueva to head the committee and appointed acting provincial administrator Francisco Dayagan, budget officer Arsenio Arbo and provincial health officer Dr. Samuel Delfin as members.

The governor said he received several complaints that government physicians had been charging exorbitant and "unreasonable" professional fees on patients who sought medical services at the government-run hospital.

He said the act is in violation of Republic Act No. 7160 or the Local Government Code and the law governing government economic enterprises.

Villanueva said the committee has met on Friday and decided to start the investigation today.

Some of the complaints that reached the office of the governor alleged that patients, particularly the indigents, were charged by the government doctors professional fees ranging from P10,000 to P20,000 for a minor operation. Other doctors charged patients from P50,000 to P80,000 for a major operation.

During the time of that governor and now outgoing Roxas City Mayor Vicente Bermejo, doctors were allowed to "moonlight" or work for private hospitals in the province when they were off-duty in or on their duty.

They were also allowed to charge professional fees on patients undergoing surgeries at the province-run hospitals.

This was a concession that Capiz gave to physicians who have completed of low salaries and to prevent their exodus from government hospitals.

The low income for doctors have been cited as the main reason many physicians have left government hospitals and local governments opted to take up nursing courses just to find jobs abroad.

Allowing doctors to privately practice did not, however, mean they could abuse patients by charging exorbitant fees, Capitol officials.

The provincial government had earlier declared RMPH as one of the economic enterprises of the provincial government. As such, patients have to pay for the use of hospital facilities, equipment and services. Indigent patients are, however, charged lower fees.

Evacuation sites other than schools eyed

SAN PEDRO, LAGUNA—NO AS not to disrupt classes, disaster management officials began scouting for areas and facilities other than public elementary and high schools that could be turned into evacuation centers in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon).

"After [Typhoon] 'Ondoy,' we've asked every LGU [local government unit] to identify and submit a list of potential evacuation centers other than their public schools," Victoria Veneracion, director of the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC), said on Saturday.

Ondoy lashed Northern Luzon in September last year, displacing more than 100,000 in Laguna alone. Most of the evacuees sought shelter in public school buildings until they were given cash to repair, clean or remove allowed to return home.

"We realized that classes were very much affected by the presence of evacuees in the schools," Veneracion said. "Classes in some schools had to be stopped over some period because there were no place for the schoolchildren."

In some instances, he said, school facilities like rooms and armchairs were destroyed by the evacuees.

"Evacuees said the last few months of January this year or four months after the typhoon struck, "Our hands very far this year is Tayabas, Balayan, Malapan, Pagbacaran," and we drew this out of the lessons learned during "Typhoon Ondoy," he said.

The RDCC is looking at covered basketball courts, barangay halls and private buildings as possible evacuation centers. Its inventory has 179 facilities all over the Calabarzon, Veneracion said.

He said they were also developing video clips as reminders of what to do during the time of disasters so schools, public theaters and parks in the region as to assume the public's "culture of safety." Marlon Ciuca, Inquirer Southern Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

■ ZAMBOANGA CITY

Police deny beheading reports

THE TWIST hostages could have been killed by their Abu Sayyaf captors after the military launched an operation that left two bandits dead, the police said.

Tim-an Basilan police chief Senior Supt. Antonio Mendoza ruled reports that Rolando Francisco, Daniel Quintilla and Andre Madriaga were beheaded by the Abu Sayyaf.

"They have five to six gunshot wounds each and it appears that their kidnappers opened bullets on them," he said.

Mendoza said the three were killed after the military launched an operation.

"While retreating, they shot anybody seen on their path and one civilian identified as Eid was also killed," he said.

Another civilian, Salimin Ambarun died, also wounded.

Lt. Col.Ben Cedric Quidesquesa of the military's Western Mindanao Command said an operation was conducted and on Friday morning in Barangay Guiong in Sumisip town.

Two Scout Rangers were wounded in the clash with Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Cedric said reports from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) indicated that the hostages were recovered around 5 p.m. Friday.

"They (Madrieo) gathered that the victims tried to run away that led to the shooting by their captors," Cedric said.

John E. Alpuda, Inquirer Mindanao

■ CATARAGUA CITY

DSWD stockpiles on food for floods

THE DEPARTMENT of Social Welfare and Development is the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has started stockpiling food stuff in anticipation of displacements due to floods as the rainy season starts.

"We are preparing for any worst-badly, that's why we have the stockpile to respond to an emergency," ARMM social welfare secretary Parouk Hussin said.

He said the region has not encouraged some areas of Maguindanao, affecting 9,200 residents. But she said no large-scale evacuation had been reported so far.

Charlie C. Delan, Inquirer Mindanao

■ NORTH COTABATO

Diarrhea cases rise

THE NUMBER of diarrhea cases in Pres. Roxas town surged to 214 as of Saturday, health officials said, but whether the illness was caused by contaminated water at the town's spring sources.

Dr. Dominic Lara, municipal health officer, earlier said they suspected that the illness was caused by the contamination of the Bual and Kinabuhan springs, where residents draw their drinking water.

But Lara said residents of other villages drawing water from the same springs did not fall ill.

He said they were awaiting the results of a microbiological analysis of the water from the spring sources.

The local health office said it doubled and added 3 more clinic personnel to prevent more people from getting sick.

Willamor A. Magbanua, Inquirer Mindanao

More Sports on A27 to A30

Late SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Dehesa

Reyes, Tang fuel late run as Painters trip Realtors

STA. LUCIA forward Ali Peek thwarts a shot by Rain or Shine import Jai Lewis during their game yesterday. ALEJANDRO MENCHAVEZ

By Marang E. Carallo

AYER REYES AND TY TANG COMBINED for half of Rain or Shine's fourth-quarter output as the Elasto Painters rallied to a 91-81 victory over the Sta. Lucia Realtors and sustained in the meaning for an outright quarterfinal berth in the PBA Fiesta Conference.

Reyes had eight and Tang five to the last pound as the Painters improved to 7-4 and moved within half a game behind the fifth and last slot that will be awarded an automatic berth in the playoff.

But coach Caloy Garcia was unhappy with the way the Painters allowed the Realtors to pull level at 65.

"We have the tendency to relax," Garcia said. "We have to fix our problems. We play Derby Ace on Friday and that is crucial because it is one of the teams that we can catch for an outright (quarterfinal) slot."

Derby Ace just score-nothing between itself and Rain or Shine, leaning on a James Yap jumper with six seconds remaining and a big stop in the end to hamstring out an 83-81 victory over powerhouse San Miguel Beer.

Yap broke down the defense of Arwind Santos and hooked a jumper from left wing to ring the final count on the Llamados with third place within a 9-5 record.

San Miguel dropped to second place at 11-3.

After the Llamados, Rain or Shine will take on Barako on June 16 and San Miguel on June 18 and Garcia said that they need to win at least two of those games to have a chance to avoid the wild card phase.

Sta. Lucia, which kept on fighting behind Anthony Johnson and Ali Peek, lost for the fifth straight time and is now at 4-10, just half a game up on the final wild card spot.

"Well, five straight losses for the team after the Bobby Williams and Hans Reyes' trade," Sta. Lucia coach Bayer Fernandez said. "We are jelling well, the energy is also there, but we still lack the finishing touch."

Johnson led the Realtors with 20 points and 13 rebounds and Peek had 16 and 11. Sta. Lucia also outrebounded the Painters, 47-29.

"The next three games we play are all big teams," Garcia said. "If we play those teams the way we did tonight...I don't think we have a chance to beat them."

The scores:

RAIN OR SHINE (91) – Lanes 10, Reyes 10, Norwood 14, Yap 13, Ando 7, Lassiter 6, Andamon 5, Mercado 5, Cruz 4, Sta.Ana 2, Hubalde 0.

STA. LUCIA (81) – Johnson 20, Peek 16, Rosa 8, Escobal 0, Mbala 7, Hrabchuk 3, Espinas 4, Mendoza 2, Alpinar 2, Ocubillo 2, Aquino 0, Bolanos 0.

Quarters: 20-16; 42-42; 72-63; 91-81

Escobal Lanes

X-MEN ENERGY ACE (83) – Yee 17, Caralde 14, Rivero 11, Tagle 11, Pingris 10, Arboleda 9, Mamaril 5, Mak 2, Suerte 0, Pascual 0.

SAN MIGUEL BEER (81) – Freeman 17, Enriquez 17, Wright 15, Mendoza 8, Ilon 7, Santos 7, Washington 6, Villanueva 5, Yeo 5, Menkveld, Melencio 0.

Quarters: 20-17; 38-34; 64-61; 83-81

Pasig, Muntinlupa forge Hoopla title duel

PASIG AND MUNTINLUPA FORGED CONvincing victories over their Final Four opponents at Nonoy Dumas gym in Calamba City late Friday to arrange a title showdown in the inaugural staging of the 2010 Coca-Cola Hoopla sa Wednesday.

Jigo Baylon beat the buzzer with a three-point shot to give Pasig a pulsating 66-79 victory over host Calamba, while Muntinlupa rode on Kevin Raad's 25 points in outscoring its opponents over winless Makati, 79-69.

Game 1 will be held either at Rizal High or the Pasig Sports Center.

Trailing, 77-79, Pasig Adviser Mark Pedrito Baylon with a pass for the winner that stunned the big Calamban crowd.

Baylon finished with just four points but his sidekicks shot over the biggest basket of the evening.

"I just shot the ball when I took the pass because I knew there was no time remaining," Baylon, an incoming freshman student at Polytechnic University of the Philippines, said in Filipino. "I'm just thankful it went in."

The winner of the maiden championship will bring home the cash prize of P150,000.

The runner-up gets P120,000, third P75,000, and fourth P50,000.

Villaber finishes 2nd

PETER VILLABER CHARGED home with a four-under 68 but settled for runner-up honors in the Veterans Amateur Golf Championship ruled by Thai Wuttit Sriganeshwaran at the Da Lat Golf Course in Vietnam yesterday.

It was Villaber's third straight top-ten finish at the prestigious tournament, including a 68 and 69 in the middle rounds, but his stubborn start of 73 told heavily in his title bid in Vietnam's premier amateur tournament.

Sriganeshwaran backed a two-under-round performance by matching the 8,758 bet's closing compatriots.

Villaber finished with a 20-under 278, four strokes behind Sriganeshwaran, whose closing 66 gave him a winning 274 aggregate.

Malaysian Mohd Ismail fired a two-under 69 for third place at 282, while Johnson Poh shot a 69 for fourth at 283.

Another Thai bet, Supakorn Supakorn, fired a 70 and finished 38th at 289 while Tanteboy Gabot, also of KTSI-Philippines, wound up eighth at 293 after a second straight 75.

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De Castro, Appari entry tops World Slasher Cup

BOBBY APPARI AND LAWYER ARTHUR CASTRO scored the biggest win of their 15-year partnership, coming from behind to top the 2010 World Slasher Cup 2 Hawaiian bridge-themed 9-Ceds Derby on Saturday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Apari and De Castro's Ari Ed As Theodore won by last four touches after buying into the championship round with 3 wins and a close behind 10 undefeated finishes in six matches.

Ari Ed As Theodore beat Eraico Online Warrior-Sil of Edward Mandrew to fight No. 13, Angel Uya of P Negrita in fight No. 37, Abdi Dolores World of Wilson by in fight No. 94 and Billyero of Jesse Bacolcia in fight No. 128.

A re-presentation of the President of Champions and Wonderful Inhospitality, the second edition of this year's "Olympics of Gold-fighting" was witnessed by hundreds of foreigners who availed of the free entrance offered by Araneta Coliseum owner Nene Araneta.

In clinching the championship in a field of 167, the duo entered full brothers of Lajpat Hatch Lowrin Hotschools for their Wish and stock fights and two 8-year old White-Legged Stonebred Classic brothers for their seventh and eighth encounters.

Asked what makes their partnership click, Apari said "neither of us is an expert."

"We make it a point to humbly acknowledge that we both need to learn continuously," said Apari.

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SCHOOL YEAR 2010-2011

Parents urged to spend Day 1 with kids

By Mike Marolen

PARENTS PLAY A KEY role in the safety and security of their children than the Southern Police District (SPD) is urging mothers and fathers to accompany their kids on the first day of the resumption of classes on June 15.

In a statement, Chief Supt. Jenny Tecson, Southern Police District (SPD) spokesperson, said that parents share with school administrators the responsibility of ensuring the safety of children in and around school.

Tecson specifically urged parents to personally check the so-

WALKING WITH DOLPHINS
A float representing a child participating in a walk along Kamagong street, Makati City painted with images of dolphins.

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Judge to hear more of Hayden case today

By DJ Yap

THE TRIAL OF FORMER GENERIC doctor Hayden Kho on charges that he committed violence against women by secretly taking videos of their sexual encounters is expected to resume today before a Pasig judge.

The prosecution is expected to continue presenting evidence against Kho at the 9 a.m. hearing to be presided by Judge Rodolfo Tandiano of the Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 160.

Sony actress Katrina Halili has accused Kho of violating Republic Act 9262, or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act, after he allegedly uploaded on the Internet videos of them having sexual intercourse that had been taken without her knowledge.

Kho's videos with different women, including Halili, have circulated online and caused a scandal in local showbusiness.

In the previous hearing in April, Kho's lawyer Lorna Kapunan moved to dismiss the case on the ground that the prosecution might have committed "double jeopardy."

Kapunan contended that while the prosecution's resolution finding probable cause to indict Kho had accused him of uploading the sex video, Kho was also being prosecuted for allegedly taking the video without Halili's consent.

But Reynaud Reled, Halili's

HALILI

KHO

lawyer, said what the accused did was still in violation of Republic Act 9262, and the mere act of taking the video could be considered an act of psychological violence.

The court told the two lawyers to redefine the facts of the case and ruled that the trial must continue.

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4 robbers strike in broad daylight in QC

By Nancy Carvajal

ARMED ROBBERS STRUCK IN broad daylight in Quezon City and carted away more than P1 million in cash intended for the salary of employees of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC), a police official said yesterday.

In a report, Supt. Lito Bersaing, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD-CIDU), said four armed masked men on two motorcycles grabbed P1,336,312 during the robbery that took place at about 11:30 a.m. Friday along Sandoville Avenue near Langka street in Project 2.

Bersaing said the three PRRC employees had just withdrawn the money from the Landbank branch on Kalayaan Road and were on their way back to the office when the gunmen blocked the path of their Honda Civic.

The employees, administrative assistant I Johnny Rodrigo, 27, administrative Assistant I Guillermo Abejo, 35, and administrative staff Wilfredo Feliag, 33, said the robbers had felonious-ized firearms.

One of the gunmen pistol-whipped and punched Abejo and Rodrigo after they tried to resist, police said.

USELESS TRAFFIC SIGN

Sito, 45, of Sampaloc, Manila, writes: "There's a 'No left turn' sign at the intersection of España Boulevard and A. H. Lacson Street if you're coming from Welcome Rotonda. However, some motorists ignore the sign. Are the traffic enforcers manning the area so stupid that they encourage motorists to violate the sign? This is a common occurrence even when traffic in the area is light..." [illegible]

The First 180 Days of the President-elect

The traditional Mid-Year briefing of the Business Economics Club (BEC), School of Economics, University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) will be held on June 9, 2010. The event with DEGUSER as media partner and Cebu Pacific as the airline carrier is entitled "THE FIRST 180 DAYS OF THE PRESIDENT ELECT". This was announced by Dr. Ramon M. Clarete, Executive Director of BEC.

Topics covered are "Macroeconomy 2010: How Will the Year of the Tiger End?," "Policy Directions: Agriculture, Industry, and Service Sectors," "17 Philippine Regions: Action Plan on Critical Issues and Immediate Prospects," and "Principles of a Globally & Morally Competitive Philippines."

The speakers from UA&P are Dr. Victor A. Abola, Dr. Emilio T. Antonio, Dr. Ramon M. Clarete, and Dr. Bernardo M. Villegas.

The resource persons are Mr. Leonardo H. Enriquez (Head, Business Resource Center, North Davao University, General Santos City, Mindanao), Mr. Antonio S. Isa (Member, Board of Trustees, Iloilo Business Club, Visayas), Mr. Santos C. Lim (Chairman Emeritus, Philippine Franchise Association), and Ms. Angela S. Lindayo (President, Asian Hotel and Leisure, Mindanao).

An 80% attendance is expected to attend this historical milestone. BEC which has been conducting these briefings since 1987 was formerly known as FRIENDS OF CEC.

Parents...

From page A1

rarely setup in the school and ensure that administrators are prepared for any emergency.

"Parents have to share the burden by talking to their children, being aware and working with other parents, school administrators and law enforcement officials," she said.

The SPD drafted a set of back-to-school tips for both students and parents, which they disseminated since the end of May.

Classes in public schools begin on June 15, but some private schools are starting the new academic year today.

Parents should look into the security plan administration have laid down, especially their readiness to respond to emergencies, the handout suggested.

"Ask if there are closed circuit television (cameras) monitoring activities in the hallways and common areas, and if the school (has) a contingency plan or even an evacuation (procedure) in case of eventualities like fire, earthquake, presence of armed personnel, threats," according to the leaflet.

When they have learned about the school's plans, parents could then ask their children if the school had told them of the measures, it added.

Authorities also encouraged parents to join organizations where they could channel any concerns regarding the school and receive support for policy changes if necessary.

More footbridges, please

We would like to ask for an additional footbridge in Commonwealth, especially near Litex and Regalado. A bumper should also be placed in the area so that pedestrians would not be able to cross the street and cause traffic or figure in an accident.

Mac Alvarez, 33, Quezon City

Enter at your own risk

The alley between Rangeng and Ipolog Streets here in Kaloocan, Quezon City, is dark and a dangerous. The street lamp has been inoperative some time, making the area a favorite hangout of criminals. I hope the authorities do something about this.

Joel, 42, Quezon City

Cops damaging image

Madalas na nakakakita ang MPD nabably car na one body number 2300 sa harap ng Mactan Airport. Sa aming mga kababayan lalagay pare sa seguridad ng bar, pero ang mga nakakakita ng mga pinkup ng mga kinakasama ang saloon English dinadamag na ang image ng pulisya pero sa Pagong PNP and MCPO? Ahaha. Hindi nakakatulong ang mga pulis na yan para mapaganda ang image ng kapulisan as a whole (Other side the MPC include car with body number 2300 at the corner of Pedro and Nebraska. At first glance, the policemen riding in the mobile car seem to be there to guard people but if you look carefully, you'll see that the only people they talk to are car owners. Paging PNP and NCRPO chiefs, these men are not enjoying the image of the police).

Jil, 28, Manila

C.M. Recto traffic

C.M. Recto corner Ilaya Bagtikan, Divisoria always congested not only because of construction/road repair and but because of jaywalkers who have turned the area into a terminal despite the presence of MTPB personnel.

Tricia, 27, Manila

Driving in the dark

The drivers of public utility jeepneys on Kalayaan and Visayas Avenues in Quezon City do not turn on their headlights at night. They just increase speed, MMDA and CPEC, please go after these drivers.

Jonie, 50, Quezon City

Bad Pasig road

Since 1992, the stretch of Marcos to Sandoval Avenues in Pinagbuhatan, Pasig City, has always been congested. However, it remains full of potholes and gets flooded even during a slight drizzle. There is too much corruption.

Lily Mendiola, 51, Pasig City

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Session 3: The Different Shades of Green and How Green Marketing Can Grow Your Market and Sales in Hyperspeed
Session 4: Trapping the Elusive Generation Y Market to Expand and Grow
PM Snack
Session 5: Tourism as the Country's Express Lane Towards Economic and Market Growth
Recap of the Day

DAY 2

WHITE SPACES IN A CHALLENGING MARKETPLACE

Session 1: The CEO's Agenda for Driving Growth Through Marketing
Session 2: Transformative Marketing Through Organizational Development and Change
Learning Sessions
Track 1: New Media
Track 2: New Channel
Lunch Break
Session 3: It's a Free World - A Radical Management Model that Works in the Philippine Setting
Session 4: Dell's Marketing
PM Snack
Session 5: Reinventing Physical Space as a Hypergrowth Strategy
Closing Session
The Future of Marketing Communication
Closing Ceremony

REGISTRATION FEES

EARLY BIRD RATE — REGULAR RATE — ON SITE (June 24) - P10,000

PMA MEMBERS - P8,500 — PMA MEMBERS - P10,000 — NON-MEMBERS - P12,000

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

TO BE BEATIFIED: Father Popiełuszko (seen as an exhibition in Warsaw), who was tortured and brutally murdered 25 years ago by the communist police, is set to be beatified on June 6. REUTERS

Pope urges support for Mideast Christians

NICOSIA, CYPRUS—POPE BENEDICT XVI appealed on Saturday for support for embattled Christian communities in the Middle East, calling them a vital force for peace in the region.

He also met with a Turkish Cypriot Muslim religious leader, part of careful diplomacy reaching out to both sides in the decades-old conflict between ethnic Greeks and Turks on the divided island.

Benedict's three-day pilgrimage to Cyprus is part of preparations for a crisis summit of Middle East bishops in Rome in October. Many bishops from the region have traveled to Cyprus to see Benedict and receive a working paper for the summit that will be made public Sunday.

War and harsh economic conditions have led to the exodus of thousands of Christians from the Holy Land, Iraq and elsewhere in recent years.

Later, at an afternoon Mass, Benedict lamented that priests have caused the emigration of Christians from the region.

He said that as families leave because of conflicts and tensions, "it can be tempting for their pastors to do likewise." AP

UN warns climate change could trigger 'mega-disasters'

GENEVA—RAVAGED BY natural catastrophes brought about by climate change are mounting, the top UN humanitarian official said on Sunday as he warned of the possibility of "mega-disasters."

John Holmes, the UN undersecretary general for humanitarian affairs, said one of the biggest challenges facing the aid community was the problem encountering from developing world per person.

"When it comes to meteorological disasters, weather-related disasters, then there is a trend upwards connected with climate change," Holmes, who is in Australia for high-level talks on humanitarian aid, said.

"The trend is there are terms of floods, cyclones and droughts," Holmes, who is the UN's emergency relief coordinator, said it had been a tough year due to January's devastating earthquake in Haiti, which killed more than 250,000 people.

He said while earthquakes, such as the 7.0-magnitude quake which levelled the Haitian capital Port-au-Prince, were sudden, weather-related natural disasters were increasing in number and scale.

"It's partly the very obvious things like the number of cyclones and the intensity of the cyclones, and the amount of flooding," he said.

"But it is also in slightly more invisible ways—in terms of both drought spreading, desertification spreading," Holmes said officials were particularly concerned about places where a combination of factors—such as large populations, or likelihood of earthquake, or susceptibility to rising sea levels—made them more vulnerable.

"One of the things we worry about is mega-cities could produce, at some point, a mega-disaster," he said.

Cities like Kathmandu for example, which sits on a geological fault-line, where a large earthquake will come along, and the results could be catastrophic," Holmes said while some countries were well-prepared for disaster—such as Chile which was hit with a 8.8-magnitude earthquake in February which left 530 people dead—others such as Haiti were less able to manage.

"That's one of the reasons we want to focus on not just how we respond to disaster, we need to do that, but how we reduce the impact of those disasters before they happen," Holmes said.

In Haiti, the situation remained serious, he said, with some 1.5 million people living in makeshift shelters and little prospect of the dislodging soon.

"There are real concerns about how vulnerable people still are, despite all the efforts that have been made," he said.

Holmes said the need for humanitarian aid was rising faster than resources were available, particularly given the long-running conflicts in areas such as Sudan's Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

At the same time, climate change would likely act as a chain migration due to drought or rising sea levels, or conflict due to a scarcity of water or arable land in varying years, and there would place more pressure on funds.

"So all these things are going to create more problems for us, and we're really not coming to grips with what the consequences might be," Holmes said.

"And you can construct some extremely scary scenarios for yourself without too much trouble.

"For example, about what the effect might be of glaciers melting in the Himalayas. Now we don't quite know whether that's happening, or will happen, or not. But if it did, what would the effect be on the major river systems of southern Asia?" AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

UK police study family feud over mass shootings

LONDON—A British taxi driver was beingpursuedarmed by two officials before he fatally shot 11 people including his own brother, police said. Derrick Bird, 52, also may have feuded with his family and colleagues before the killing spree, police said on Saturday. Bird killed his brother David and a family lawyer before departing on a 45-mile rampage across a rural area of northern England, targeting his taxi workmates and strangers. Police said he killed 10 victims in a single area, shooting many in the face. Bird drove through various country areas in his car to evade police, firing from the window as he passed victims. He shot himself dead on Wednesday in a remote woodland as officers closed in. AP

2 men accused of intending to kill troops arrested in US

NEWARK, New Jersey—Two New Jersey men who allegedly intended to kill American troops were arrested on Saturday in a New York City airport before boarding flights on their way to join a jihadist group in Somalia, a newspaper reported. Mohamed Hamood Alessa, 20, and Carlos Eduardo Bledsoe, 28, were arrested at John F. Kennedy International Airport before they could board separate flights to Egypt and then continue on to Somalia, The Star-Ledger of Newark reported. Alessa, of Wharton Borough, and Bledsoe, of Elmwood Park, were charged with conspiring to commit an act of international terrorism through al-Shabaab, a violent extremist group based in Somalia and connected to al-Qaeda. The officials told the newspaper, Al-Shabaab was designated by the US as a terrorist group in 2008. AP

Taiwan's Ma tells China to back off on trade pacts

REPUBLIC OF CHINA, PRESIDENT Ma Ying-jeou called on Beijing to stop blocking Taiwan from signing free trade agreements with other countries.

"Taiwan has the right to sign FTAs with any country of its choosing," Ma said June 2. "As a member of the World Trade Organization, Taiwan is entitled to enter into FTAs as it sees fit."

The president's remarks came during an exclusive interview with the BBC at the Presidential Office in Taipei. The talk took place just one day after a mainland Chinese foreign affairs Ministry spokesperson said Beijing firmly opposes Taiwan concluding FTAs with other countries.

According to Ma, his administration will intensify efforts in large closer economic ties with other economies. "Taiwan should not suffer inconvenience while resolving its right to sign FTAs," he said.

But despite Beijing's tough stance on the Taiwan FTA issue, Ma believes his administration must still sign the cross-strait economic cooperation framework agreement. "If Taiwan does not sign the ECFA, the country risks being marginalized and losing competitiveness overseas," he said.

Asked whether mainland China's influence over Taiwan would chill free examination to politics after the ECFA is inked, Ma said it is a real issue that should not be overlooked. "We have worried about this question for a long time but cannot let it affect our decision making."

Regarding the ECFA signing process, the president stressed that both sides wished to conclude the trade pact as soon as possible.

"Our guess that the pact involves a huge number of technical issues, it takes time for these to be satisfactorily addressed," he said. "Investors, the ECFA timetable remains unchanged and the agreement will be signed in June." AFP

In addition, the president urged Beijing to face the "painful history" of its crackdown on demonstrators at Tiananmen Square June 4, 1989.

Getting ready for the coming flu season

IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED that almost 5,000 Filipinos were infected by the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus last year. While the number of those infected subsided by the end of 2009, this did not mean the virus disappeared completely.

Though the global paranoia has somewhat subsided, let us not lose track of the fact that the normal seasonal influenza is also a serious public health problem that kills more than 250,000 to 500,000 people worldwide every year.

"The Philippines should take more caution from the regular seasonal flu than what they are easily overlooked. They are equally dangerous but could be easily managed if people take proper precautions against them.

We should also be on guard against the flu especially that another school year is about to happen. Because schools are an excellent place for flu viruses to attack and spread. families with school-age children are at a higher risk for more infections than other families.

One of the best defenses available today is getting a flu shot. Getting the flu shot should provide enough protection because the current (H1N1) seasonal flu vaccine included not only the prevailing flu virus strains but also the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus.

"As the Philippines nears the peak of its flu season this June, those who would take the necessary precautions such as flu shots are protected from getting sick or at least kept from becoming as sick as they might otherwise.

Experts recommend giving flu shots to highly vulnerable segment of the population such as young children, the elderly and those with existing chronic health conditions and weakened immune systems.

These individuals are most likely to develop complications including the deadly bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, or could worsen chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

Other healthy tips to prevent the spread of the virus include frequent hand washing, covering your mouth and nose whenever you sneeze or cough, and staying away from sick persons. These same tips can also be taught to children to prevent inviting bad bugs into your home.

To know more about the flu, visit www.bakuna.ph or ask your doctor about it.

ADVT

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PROSPERITY

THE 2nd NEW PROSPERITY FORUM
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CARP/LAD Form No. 9
Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Province of Agusan del Norte
Region No. 13

PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF COVERAGE (NOC)

Pursuant to the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law or Republic Act (R.A.) No. 6657, as amended, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) is mandated to subject the landholdings of Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company (Metro Bank), with last known address at Makati, Metro Manila, under the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) or Phase Two (2) - those (2) hectares up to five hectares which have already been subject to Notice of Coverage before December 31, 2008 (Specify land acquisition schedule based on the prescribed phasing under Section 5 of R.A. No. 9700). The subject landholdings is/are embraced by OCT/TCT/CTO No.s RT-28146 and RT-28147 and located at Tagaibo, Butuan City.

Within 30 calendar days from the date of this Notice of Coverage (NOC) publication, the aforementioned landowner must:

1. Exercise his right to choose his/her retention area not exceeding five (5) hectares pursuant to Section 6 of R.A. 6657, as amended;
2. Nominate his/her child(ren) who are at least fifteen (15) years of age and actually tilling or directly managing the farm as his/her preferred beneficiary/ies in the subject landholdings; and
3. File an application for an exemption clearance or his exclusion from CARP coverage of his/her landholding with the DAR Provincial Office (CARPO) if no qualified under the law.

Failure to reply requirements of this NOC within the prescribed period shall be a waiver of the landowner's right to choose his retention area, the privilege to nominate child(ren) as preferred beneficiary/ies, or to apply for exemption/exclusion from CARP coverage.

(Sgd.) ANDRES D. AFRIAN
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer II

The WORLD

Critic Lawrence B. Greco

A WOMAN holding a Koran salutes part in a protest against Israel's storming of a Gaza-bound aid flotilla that left nine pro-Palestinian activists dead. AFP

Israel moves swiftly to expel new Gaza blockade recruits

JERUSALEM—ALL ACTIVISTS AND CREW ON board the Rachel Corrie aid ship which tried to run the Israeli blockade of Gaza would be expelled from Israel on Sunday, an Israeli immigration official said.

"Everyone on board the boat will be expelled on Sunday after they signed a waiver renouncing their right to appeal to an Israeli judge," said Sabina Haddad.

She said six Malaysian nationals and a Cuban would leave Israel through the Allenby crossing into Jordan, while the remaining 11 people would fly out of Israel from Ben Gurion international airport near Tel Aviv.

Immigration officials earlier said the pacifists had been detained after the Star Irish motorsails, including Nobel Peace Prize winner Mairead Maguire, had initially refused to sign the waiver.

Israeli forces intercepted and seized control of the Rachel Corrie on Saturday as it tried to reach the Gaza Strip, in a powerful operation which led to a radically different outcome than an earlier raid on an aid flotilla that left nine dead.

The Irish-crafted, 1,200-tonne vessel was escorted into the southern Israeli port of Ashdod, and the activists and crew were taken to the Ocker immigration center near Tel Aviv for questioning.

Israel said its forces boarded the Rachel Corrie—manned after a US activist killed in 2003 as she tried to prevent an Israeli bulldozer from razing a Palestinian home—"with the agreement" of those on board.

"Our forces boarded the boat and took control without meeting any resistance from the crew or the passengers. Everything took place without violence," a military spokesperson said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the operation.

"We saw today the difference between a ship of peace activists, with whom we don't agree but we respect their right to a different opinion from ours, and a ship of hate organized by violent Turkish terror extremists," he said.

Saturday's outcome stood in stark contrast to a botched Navy operation against a six-ship flotilla on Monday, which ended in the deaths of nine activists—eight Turks and a US-Turkish citizen.

But the latest takeover prompted a furious response from the Dublin-based Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

"For the second time in less than a week, Israeli forces stormed and hijacked an unarmed aid ship, kidnapping its passengers and forcing the ship toward Ashdod port," it said.

The Rachel Corrie was carrying around 1,000 tonnes of aid and supplies, half of which was reportedly cement, which is banned by Israel as it fears it could be used by the Islamist group Hamas which controls the Gaza Strip to build fortifications.

Saturday's operation came at a sensitive time, with international diplomacy battered after Monday's deadly raid. AFP

Avalanche of new crises engulfs Obama White House

WASHINGTON—A CRUSH OF NEW environmental, financial, political and diplomatic crises is ravaging President Barack Obama, reviving the tragic mortality of his crisis-marred New White House year.

Just a few months ago, it seemed Obama had reached easier ground after signaling 2009's, when the euphoria of his historic election dissolved into the reality of mountain-size governments.

Obama was building on political ale in March after his first-term performance down health care reform through Congress—a victory no previous Democratic president had secured.

He then shrugged a massive arms reduction deal with Russia, and proved his growing global clout by bringing world leaders to Washington for a nuclear summit.

In late April, Wall Street bulls took the Dow Jones Industrial Average to a 52-week high of over 11,200, cheering Americans whose index-linked pensions were pulverized by recession.

But fresh trouble was brewing.

In April 20 Minerva on a Gulf of Mexico oil rig, set off the worst environmental disaster in US history.

Footage of a gushing undersea oil pipe, and shots of sea birds covered in thick oil, were thrown to embarrass the Obama presidency, ahead of midterm congressional politics in November.

With his government's reticence on BP out as the villain of the disaster, to stop the disastrous leak, Obama looked impotent, and was accused of non-Reaganite muffins anger across his own constituencies.

A CBS poll Friday found only 36 percent of American approve of the administration's handling of the disaster—partly explaining Obama's third trip to the Gulf coast Friday.

Shaper of Obama's characterizers among the self-appointed Washington pundit classes have now turned to lacing critiques of the president.

But the catastrophe is not the only big issue descending White House attention.

The nightmare scenario of war on the Korean peninsula, set even a month has passed a year of public obsessiveness—for sex scandal in a Gaza and Florida which enraged public opinion among Muslims.

The White House insists the drama will not derail its effort to pass new US Security Council sanctions on Iran, perhaps as soon as next week.

But even scintillating Russia said Friday it had, along with China, pooled the sanctions draft of "paralyzing" measures, making previous US predictions of "crippling" sanctions ring hollow.

The White House sounded Friday that Obama, who bills himself as the "first multilateral President" would face the embarrassment of cancelling a trip to Indonesia and Australia for the second time.

The announcement was a reminder of how fast-laid plans can be derailed by pressing crises—the cancellation was put down to the oil spill—but is also a symbolic blow to his foreign policy.

After unveiling to some nations this any other first-year president—Obama is yet to venture abroad this year—apart from a quick trip to Prague to sign the Russia nuclear deal in early April.

April's brutally politics are also a concern. The bears are back, with the Dow dipping below the 10,000 mark with a year of gains largely wiped out.

More troublingly are fears for the recovery with a disappointing jobs report Friday, and from European leaders could fail to stem a debt crisis and threaten the US economy.

OIL LEAKS at the site of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, in this BP file video feed on June 3. AFP

A long, hard haul seems certain. As Obama's wife Michelle put it Friday, "The easy button has been taken away forever." Despite the gloom, Obama, seems progressively upbeat.

On Thursday he insisted to a CNN interviewer, "This is the best job on Earth." And White House spokesperson Robert Gibbs rejects the media narrative that the oil crisis will reshape Obama's agenda.

"We don't seem really deal with just one subject every day," Gibbs said, ripping reporters for short-termism.

Some facts also backdrop the White House case.

Despite the media fixation on the oil spill, Obama looks set to add several legacy lifting achievements in the coming weeks.

Most notably, he will have a sweeping financial reform bill to sign before the July 4 holiday, and his second Supreme Court nominee Elena Kagan, bodyguard for a months-long confirmation battle.

Recent opinion polls still show Obama at just below the crucial 50 percent barrier—making him much more popular than his political foes. AFP

PSALM Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation

INVITATION TO BID

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management (PSALM) Corporation Privatization Bids and Awards Committee (the "Committee") invites interested parties to participate in and bid for the Appointment as IPP Administrator ("IPPA") for the:

Contracted Capacity of the Naga Power Plant Complex located at Naga, Cebu composed of the Cebu Power Plant Complex 1 with an installed capacity of 53 MW, Cebu Power Plant Complex 2 with an installed capacity of 55 MW and Cebu Diesel Power Plant 1 with an installed capacity of 24 MW (collectively the "Naga Contracted Capacity")

Interested parties must submit a Letter of Interest ("LOI") for the Naga Contracted Capacity to the Committee which shall state the full name, address, telephone and fax numbers of the interested party, name of the principal contact, and designation an authorized representative. All LOIs shall be received by the Committee at the Ms. Rose Del Rosario Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Philippine International Convention Center, Vicente Sotto Ave., Pasay City, Metro Manila on or before **10:00 a.m. on 14 June 2010** (the "LOI Submission Deadline"). Only interested parties that submit an LOI by the LOI Submission Deadline shall be allowed to participate further in the bidding process.

As a prerequisite to the receipt of the Bidding Packages, interested parties shall execute a Confidentiality Agreement and an Undertaking pursuant to Section 7hof Rule XIII of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184 (the "IRR"), which shall be attached as the "IPP Power Supply Agreement Undertaking" (the "Undertaking"), which shall be executed by the Participating Bidder, and submitted to the Committee at the Ms. Rose Del Rosario Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Philippine International Convention Center, Vicente Sotto Ave., Pasay City, Metro Manila on or before **10:00 a.m. on 14 June 2010** (the "Undertaking Deadline"). Only interested parties that submit an LOI by the LOI Submission Deadline shall be allowed to participate further in the bidding process.

As a prerequisite to the receipt of the Bidding Packages, interested parties shall execute a Confidentiality Agreement and an Undertaking pursuant to Section 7hof Rule XIII of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184 (the "IRR"), which shall be attached as the "IPP Power Supply Agreement Undertaking" (the "Undertaking"), which shall be executed by the Participating Bidder, and submitted to the Committee at the Ms. Rose Del Rosario Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Philippine International Convention Center, Vicente Sotto Ave., Pasay City, Metro Manila on or before **10:00 a.m. on 21 June 2010** (the "Undertaking Deadline"). Only interested parties that submit an LOI by the LOI Submission Deadline shall be allowed to participate further in the bidding process.

The Bidding Packages, which includes the Bidding Procedures, shall be issued during office hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) from **14 to 21 June 2010** (the "Deadline") at the PSALM Office. Only interested parties or consortia (as described below) that have been issued the Bidding Package by the Deadline will be allowed to participate further in the bidding process for the appointment as IPPA for the Naga Contracted Capacity.

An interested party that submits the LOI must be the party that will participate in the bidding process, submits a bid, and enters into the pertinent agreements. One or more interested party commits the confidentiality agreement and undertaking and pays the Participation Fee, each interested party may no longer be substituted in the bidding process, except through a consortium in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Bidding Procedures, among the requirements of which are (i) each interested party must own at least a majority of the voting interest outstanding and controlling vote in such consortium; (ii) the consortium must be registered with the SEC and (iii) a letter requesting to be formed consortium must be submitted to the Committee on or before the deadline set for the same in the Bidding Procedures.

The schedule of the bidding activities shall be as follows:

Qualification Evaluation	**14 June 2010** (Last | business days prior to bid submission deadline)
Pre-Bid Conference	2:00 p.m. on **23 June 2010** at the PSALM Office
Bid Submission Deadline	12:00 noon on **19 August 2010** at the PSALM Office

References to time dates and times shall be based on Manila time. Should any of the above dates fall on a holiday, the deadline shall be extended to the same time on the immediately succeeding business day in Makati City.

A two-envelope bidding system will be adopted. Interested Parties will be required to post a bid security equivalent to **Five (Php 5.00 Billion (US$ 108,695.65)** in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit which must be acceptable to the Committee. Should security of the winning bidder shall be substituted by a performance security to guarantee project, NRCA and complete performance of its obligations under the transaction.

The details of the appointment as IPPA for the Naga Contracted Capacity are contained in the Bidding Packages.

Letters of Interest, Confidentiality Agreements and Undertakings shall be addressed and submitted to: The Chairman, Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee, PSALM Corporation, 7th Floor, Bangkok Building, 6784 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines. Inquiries and clarifications shall be addressed to Mr. Pedro G. Acedo at the PSALM Office, or at telefax number (632) 555-0000 or e-mail address **pgacedo@psalm-gov.ph**

The Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any interested party or bidder or cancel or bids therefore, or any part thereof, and/or to waive any defects contained therein and accept the offer advantageous to the Government, without offering any reason whatsoever. It does not assume any obligation to compensate or indemnify parties for any expenses or loss that they may incur as a result of their participation in the privatization process, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made. Finally, it reserves the right to modify, supplement, change, suspend or terminate the Bidding Procedures and other aspects of the privatization process at any time, including the schedule and the remaining bidder, for any reason whatsoever and without giving prior notice. Interested parties and/or bidders will be notified subsequently of such modifications, supplements or changes.

(Sgd.) **JOSE C. BACETA**
PSALM Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
DILIMAN CITY

UP'S SPECIAL BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE LEASE OF CUPANG, MUNTINLUPA PROPERTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES SYSTEM

1. The University of the Philippines System, Diliman Quezon City through its Special Bids and Awards Committee (Upsabac) is inviting to lease the property described below:

VICINITY MAP

Description	Parcel(s) of Land with Improvement
Area	Approximately 44,645 square meters
Address	Km 21, East Service Road, South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) Barangay Cupang, Muntinlupa City, Metro Manila

2. The University of the Philippines now invites Bids/Proposals from interested entities/proponents for the lease development of the above property.

The following are the schedule of activities:

Activities	Date	Venue
Deadline for submission of Pre-Qualification Documents	June 15, 2010 (Friday), 3:00 PM	UP System SP&D
Pre-Bidding Conference	July 5, 2010 (Monday), 10:00 AM	SP&D Room, Quezon Hall, UPD
Deadline for submission of Bids	July 14, 2010 (Friday), 10:00AM	SP&D Room, Quezon Hall, UPD
Public Opening	July 14, 2010 (Friday), 10:30AM	SP&D Room, Quezon Hall, UPD

3. Interested Bidders/Proponents may view premises and accordingly upon payment of a non-refundable fee amounting to Php1,000.00 to UP System Cash Office.

4. All interested prospective bidders/proponents may inspect the property from 8:00AM to 5:00PM, Monday to Friday.

5. The Upsabac and the Philippines System through its Special BAC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to waive any defects of bidding/proposal, or not award the contract in accordance with applicable laws.

6. For further information, please refer to:

Ms. ISAGANI L. BADOY
Upsabac Secretariat
UP System Treasury and Property Management Office
Lower Ground Floor, Quezon Hall Building
UP Diliman Campus, Quezon City
Telephone No. 920-48-10 local 20 or 981-8500 local 2518

(Sgd.) **ARLENE A. SARMIENTO**
Vice President for Administration and
Chair, Special Bids and Awards Committee

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SPORTS
Editor Tobbyric S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

- **Cotto KOs** Foreman, claims 3rd weight title /A30

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BARRIOS: If I am going to step down, it is not because of performance

Barrios ready to step down

Salud looms as new PBA chief

By Nonoy R. Castillo

LIKE A TRUE, LOYAL SOLDIER, MANUEL "Noynoy" Barrios yesterday announced he is ready to turn over the reins of the country's pro basketball league to a new commissioner.

Breaking his silence for the first time since news of his possible replacement cropped up last week, the Philippine Basketball Association commissioner said he is actually looking forward to his retirement, adding he feels he has performed his duties well.

"Humbly, we submit, that we are not doing poorly during our watch," Barrios told reporters in an impromptu press conference at the Sonata Coliseum, where he supervised league games with the newly appointed deputy commissioner, Jaycee Chito Salud, for the first time.

"If I am going to step down, it is not because of performance," added Barrios, who was appointed commissioner as of the start of the 2009 season. "I'm 100% sure and is not in the business of giving away concessions."

SALUD

He said that in his five conferences in the

BARRIOS, A28

PBA games story in Late Sports on A21

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Dolphins bounce back; Taguig up

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CEBU BOUNCED BACK FROM A STINGing defeat to crush Alabang, 8-1, yesterday and grab sole second place in the Baseball Philippines league-6 of the Rizal Memorial ballpark.

The former 2-and-league 4 champion Dolphins, who dropped an 8-7 decision to Hanzo Shade last Saturday, blasted the Tigers for 14 hits, including a solo homer run by pitcher Joel Orillosa, in the fourth inning of the rain-delayed match.

Cebu, which scored all its runs in the first four frames, improved its record to 2-1, behind unbeaten Manila (2-0), while the Tigers dropped to 1-1.

Bernard Tagaig and Pangasugo have bonded up in what became the league's longest game so far before the Dolphins won in the 12th inning on a run-scoring single by Dolphins Paul de Leon.

Richard Hanzo came home from third on De Leon's hit off Hanzo—Blanzo that broke the 2-2 tie Taguig forged in the 9th inning.

Hanzo had reached first on an error, stole second and took third on an infield out.

"It is a very hard contest for us," said manager Felino Francisco of Taguig's first win in three games. "This is a young team, we have fresh faces, and we still have to set just to a lot of things."

Pangasugo, which notched a run each in the first two innings, absorbed a second straight loss.

YOUNG Lapu-Lapu Batang TNT Quezon City and Batang B-Meg Derby Ace Kabalitz are seen in action during the game between the two teams. | MB photo

Batang TNT blasts B-Meg for title

RAINIG TALK IN TEXT QUEZON City worked behind a solid full-court press in the second half to come away with a 92-80 win of Batang B-Meg Derby Ace Cebuano yesterday and win the 2010 Wowowin Batang PBA Philippine Championship at the San Juan Sports Arts Area.

The Batang Texters formed a close game from a blowout with a series of spurts in the third period (10-on-forty-one) to capturing their second straight junior PBA crown for the season.

Jolo Mendoza, named Most Valuable Player of the tournament for playoffs, scored 8 to 12, justified his award with a game-high 20 points for the Batang Texters, who also captured the Batang Pilipinas Summer League crown.

John Mercon Gallego contributed 17 points while Troy Louie Ilo scored 11 of his 13 in the third period where the Batang Texters pulled away.

Batang TNT actually won 11 straight games in a marched dates back to the Batang PBA Summer League.

Trailing 60-62, the Batang Texters held the Dominoes without a field goal for an eight-and-one minutes to score comfortably ahead, 68-44.

"I told the boys to just keep the game close because at the end of the day I am confident we will overcome the challenge with our defense," said Batang TNT/QC coach Mark Brosas.

Earlier, Powerade Batang Bacolod recovered Bonnevie Batang Cebu, 69-56, in the battle for third.

Jared Jacob paced the Batang Lemonade with 24 points, while Patrick Cabanos contributed 19. —Cedaff P. Ilgano

Barrios ready to step down

From page A27

PBA, he and his staff were granted 100-percent performance bonuses.

"And if the PBA Board's gonna re-hono-ur, it is because we are deserving," he said. "Hindi na siguro ninanong ipakita sa tatay ko [It is not a bad thing to show to one's father]."

The appointment of Infad on Tuesday as the No. 2 man sparked rumors that Barrios is on the way out, a fact that Barrios still not deny.

"To the question of when I am stepping down, I have no specific date," he explained. "But with deputy Chito Salud, I can aggressively withdraw hesitation, pursue my retirement I plan. That would bring a long one, I will use it to respect my Baguio home where I intend to retire."

Infad, for his part, said that he is "truly elated and extremely grateful (to the board)" for making him join the third deputy commissioner of the league after Tomeo Marcoso and his father Rudy.

Before the annual Draft, tentatively dated Aug. 22, Chito—who said that he has an ID as the first PBA hallboy in 1975—and his dad will consider PBA history as the only father and son ever to become commissioners of (not) first play the pay basketball.

"No, I never expected to be offered (a position like PBA) again," said Chito, the oldest son of Rudy who guided the league in some of its finest years in the 1980s.

"I look forward to working with the commissioner and the board," he added.

Chito Salud, impending appointment not one of Rudy who guided the league after the late Leo Prieto and Hidelaro Vidal, Reynaldo Marquez, Emilio Benavidez Jr., Ned Edo and Barrios.

Barrios' son, meanwhile, will start to end to done to 21 years of service to the league (46-first 14 years served as various capacities) as he begins an official of the finance department to executive director under Bernardino.

Aguinaldo keeps Asian Ladies golf crown

CAMP AGUINALDO I RIDE ON A GOLD around to turn back Intel Seventh Master Tour as it retained the Group 1 crown in the Asian Ladies Team Championships at the Camp John Hay Golf Club in Baguio City last Thursday.

After beating Sibley Golf by 13 points last year, Aguinaldo prevailed by 2.1 over South towards the time with a 453 total and took three rounds with a 149 on the second day of the event that used the Modern scoring system.

Aguinaldo, composed of Josie Bridal, Mimi Salido, Joann Bisso and Bianca Pagdanganan, scored 223 in the first round and wrapped up its campaign with a 223 in the four-to-play, three-to-count tournament.

The Conservatives' Aguinaldo golfers grabbed the opening-day lead with 228 but squeezed with a 222 on the second day and finished with a 221 for a 891 total.

Ate Gonzales, however, clinched the individual crown for Southwoods in Group 1 with rounds of 48 and back-to-back 48s for a 144 aggregate.

Baguio Highlands also kept the Group 2 crown behind its Team 2 squad of Cat Bose, Malia Flores, Liz Mangalindan and Debbie Kwenah, while Baguio Country Club captured the Group 3 plum over Camp John Hay.

Led by Group 2 individual champion Bose, Baguio Highlands 2 shrunked out rounds of 183, 183 and 189 for a whopping 28-point victory margin over John Hay.

Bose, the former top star of Ilet Aquino, Hai Hua Soo, Nanette Filler and Jacqi Ang Soon, sustained Highlands' opening-round output but sweetened in the last two days with 181 and 183 for a 909 total.

Baguio also fulled the hosts in Group 3 as it posted a 275 total for a 14-point win over Camp John Hay 3, which had 1,261.

Not to be outdone, Rich Bradley, Raquel Aguinaldo and Lorry Tyner combined for 91, 94 and 90 for BCC while John May behind Steve Phillips, Marianne Bautista, Jose Flores and Isidro Dogay, turned in rounds of 89, 91, 91.

Camp Aguinaldo 2's Mable Sanchez took the individual plum with a 213 from rounds of 72, 70 and 69.

The event was sponsored by Softtex, Wayland Benabe, Jr. Investigation Agency, Inc., Asia Pacific Golf Grp., Camp John Hay Manor, Jet Chef, Polkadot, Bandana & Bayan Law Offices, Camp John Hay Development Corp., Baguio Sports Marketing, Boracay Sands and Fun-ways and Hammocks.

Adjust and adapt when out of your zone

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Joe Antonio

BENGALI CITY—THE TEST OF ANY basketball team is when it goes out of its comfort zone and into conditions it is not exactly attuned to.

Such is the case when the PBA brings its stars to the provinces.

The hospitality and warmth of fans in Toledo City, Davao City, Ormoc or anywhere else the league visits is always there.

Managing the games is always a challenge and the PBA has handled this well with pioneers partners through the years. There are the expected occasional logistical problems like visitors, security or accommodations.

It's just the when you take a stretch out of the road and there are hurdles in every area (indoor and after the show).

The road test is for the teams that play "homewood as their "home court" at the Smart Araneta Coliseum, which is accessible from almost anywhere and is air-conditioned, players have to deal with different conditions when they play on the road.

Just like last Saturday in Batangas City. The city is laid out like most provincial cities but what strikes you immediately is the general cleanliness of the place.

There are no many vestiges of the last elections. The beautifying along the centre city made to coincidence, with plants obviously getting ample water and shrubbing.

Barangay Sandiwa and Talk 'n Text cast on the Batangas City Sports Complex floor. It is a modern structure that has better architecture than most multipurpose venues.

There are wide passageways and several exits for mobility and ample parking available. The seats are tightly packed but not entirely uncomfortable.

It's a good place for a game, but like most provincial venues, doesn't see air conditioning. The venue seems ready for it though, what's lacks burning available.

The 6,000 fans that filled the venue were pepped for the game as they were dressed in their home and townhood. Boundary lines and brought hand-fans of all shapes.

The absence of air-conditioning on a hot summer day plus a badly endowed PBA game produces heat and humidity of unnerving proportions.

The floor got slick and it got slippery and the ball became difficult to grip. Holding the ball a second in the hands of a opposing player team.

The difficult conditions affect both clubs, and they try to shorten a hurry to make the adjustments quickly.

Talk 'n Text survived two strike in the Go Hotshots to take a comfortable Doubleeight lead in the last two minutes. Gimbo coach Tony Chua-o then jumped to the court to bring Talk 'n Text from the two-hour-last end to stop the clock to work.

The pastime reminded me of both the Finance-winning 10-theorists and Gimbo veteran Sunday Salvacion having two timeout years. Gimbo gained a fighting chance but ran out of time (and talent too).

Talk 'n Text countered by hacking the missed free throws and remaining points in the end. Jimmy Alapag scored the "friend" and with this ball handling and best throws.

Over theirs' troops reached their winning rate to 11 games, with still tougher games ahead against San Miguel and Barangay Ginebra San.

In unfamiliar surfaces, teams and players have to mix up the intensities quickly and go with their strengths.

Complaining about a slippery ball and floor and the hour won't change a thing.

Soldiers in the trenches bring fears, football by enemy this can't change the course of battle by cribbing about how hard it is.

Neither can those who call daily in the heat and rain of the city streets.

Pacquiao heads tough SJC Int'l 8-cock derby

ROBIN HERO MANNY PACQUIAO HEADS the list of more than 100 local and international cockers in the 2010 SJC International Cock Derby which gets under way Wednesday at the San Juan Coliseum in San Juan.

Pacquiao, now a respected gamefowl breeder, will field MPBH Sarangani Local II of his three gamefowl founder Boy Boys of Laguna.

The 3-day international cockfest will also have derby date on June 12, 14 and 16 and has 96 million at stake, according to SJC owner Rodolfo Planas.

Planas himself is an one of the top cockbreeders, mainly due to his now popular Gordons silver duns (bulli) which grew from the championships in the storied Global Alaska 8-Cock International Derby.

Also among the local participants are Governor Grace "Bey" Padilla, Eddie Ejercito, Ricky Reyes, Boy Abunda, Governor Jun Ogassian, Jinoy delos Santos, subway idol Patrick Antonio, Eric dela Rosa, Boy de Boca, Rio Salcedo, Vice Mayor Gene Vinluan, Tony Landa, Wenceslao Sadel and Vico Sotto.

Gerald Medrano of Olilas, caravan up to the second leg of the 2010 SJC International Derby banner a tough cast of foreign participants.

All participants will receive 50 percent of derby proceeds (cost share per entry).

For more information, call 7203-0369 and 7250-5563. Look for Amelia Perez.

Angping unhappy with Asiad athletics bets: 'Shape up now'

By Jose Mauro

THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION yesterday raised concern over the performance of track and field athletes in the recent National Open, saying their relaxing efforts scare off the Asian Games medal standards.

PSC chair Harry Angping pointed out that several members of the national team showed lackluster performances and didn't come close to challenging existing SEA records.

"A lot of them are not performing up to par," said Angping. "Isolan, in the previous National Open, their performances have gone down."

One example was long jump record holder Henry Dagmil, who bungled six tries before losing the gold to SEAmsterdam Rene Herrera.

Angping said the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association should start preparing its athletes using Asian medal standards to avoid a disastrous exit in the Guangzhou hotel on Nov. 12 to 27.

"With five months before the Games, we have to do something. It's not a joke," he said.

In fact, the biggest medal hopes remain long jump queen Marestella Torres, who has been booked for training in Germany and Sweden, specialist Mercon Alilano.

Mejia shares Asean lead

KUALA PERMISSIVE—GIOVANNI Mejia and Mideya Kenneth Bolanos pulled off impressive victories over their respective weight divisions to share the lead with countrymates on three points in the 14-and-under boys' category in the 10th Asean + age group chess championships at the Tunku Abdul Rahman Stadium.

Mejia, the top player of La Salle Green Hills, defeated Peter Chin of Singapore in the second round and candidate master Le Hieu Thai of Vietnam in the third round to take his score to three points in this 10-day competition organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines in cooperation with other Asean Chess Confederations.

In the boys' 20-under, top seed Rombir Bureos and Fabuelito Infante-Antonio tried to rise over him for the top spot with 2.5 points.

Bureos whipped FIDE Master Ger Chong of Vietnam in the second round and drew with FM Yon Thai Nhu Tung in the third round, while Gabriela halved the point with Vietnamese Le Pham Tuong of Thailand in the second round and won over Chi Tran Thanh Tu of Vietnam.

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Soderling ready for French Open final

PARIS—HYDEN SODERLING HOPES HIS EXPERIENCE OF PLAYING Roger Federer in last year's final will help him forge an upset against Rafael Nadal in the French Open men's singles final later on Sunday.

The Swede defeated Nadal in last year's fourth round on the way to his first Grand Slam final but never really got going against Federer, losing in three sets. Reuters

Fowler still ahead in Memorial golf

DUBLIN, OHIO—RICKIE FOWLER HELD ON TO A THREE-SHOT LEAD at the Memorial Saturday at Muirfield Village.

Fowler kept bogeys off his card for the second straight day to shoot 3-under 69 to lead Tim Petrovic (69) and Ricky Barnes, who fired a four-under-par 68 while playing alongside Tiger Woods. Woods had a 70 to tie for third, tied for 20th. Phil Mickelson was two shots better after a 70. AP

SPORTS

Italian makes tennis history

PARIS—WITH THE PERSEVERANCE OF A Martian, Francesca Schiavone became the first Italian woman to win a Grand Slam title by beating Samantha Stosur in the final of the French Open on Saturday, 6-4, 7-6 (2).

Schiavone threw aggravation, per her fists to her face, skipped about the court and laughed at the crowd's enthusiasm. And then, when she had won the final, she really let her emotions show.

The tour veteran rallied from a 6-1 deficit in the second set and took the deciding tiebreak 9-7 with a succession of brilliant shots.

On winning, Schiavone fell onto her back, then rolled over and kissed the clay. She was revered with the and hugged Svetor Mary Pierce, the 2000 champion, partnered Schiavone with the Sanchez Longhi Cup.

"You give me a great trophy," Schiavone told her. "I feel amazing."

At 20, Schiavone became the oldest woman to win her first Grand Slam title since Australia won Wimbledon in 1980 at age 30. She's the first Italian Grand Slam champion since Adriano Panatta won the French Open men's title in 1976.

Schiavone was seeded 17th. The only other time the title has been won by a woman not seeded in the top 10 was in 2002.

"Everybody has the chance to be who you really want to be, and do everything in your life," Schiavone said. "This is what has happened to me."

The women's final was the best in nearly a decade at Roland-Garros, and the quality of play climaxed in the tiebreaker. Schiavone reached match point by hitting her consecutive winners, the last a surging backhand volley, and she exulted after every one.

"I was feeling much more energy, more and more and more," Schiavone said. "I couldn't sing it. I really felt that was my moment, and I could it. I didn't lose the chance." AP

FRANCESCA Schiavone enjoys her moment with the "great trophy." — AP

Cotto KOs Foreman, claims 3rd weight title

NEW YORK—MIGUEL COTTO OF PUERTO Rico stopped Israel's Yuri Foreman in the ninth-round harrowing night to win the WBO junior welterweight title. It was the eighth consecutive win for the first fight at Yankee Stadium in more than three decades.

Foreman slipped to the seventh round and badly wanted his right knee, then slipped to the mat again later in the round. He gamely survived to the end but could hardly move around the ring, limping on a right knee that was already covered by a black brace and gauze wrapped by Cotto as well.

"I proved this night, everybody who said [skipper] Gerry was finished, everybody talked," said Cotto, who won his third weight title.

Between rounds, Foreman's wife leaned over the railing and implored his trainer to stop the fight. Instructor in Foreman's corner obliged and threw in the towel early in the seventh round, but referee Arthur Mercante Jr. angrily tossed the towel right back out. He asked Foreman if he wanted to continue, and the aspiring rabbi with the compelling back story elected to fight on.

The ring had filled with people and was cleared before the fight continued.

"I looked at the corners and I saw his trainer throwing the towel in the ring," Cotto said. "The referee said someone from outside the corner threw the towel into the ring."

Foreman (28-1) was able to move better in the eighth round and survived to the ninth, where Cotto caught him near the ropes and dropped him to the canvas one more time.

"Yuri was white-round and needed a little more," Foreman said. "I didn't want it to be over."

Mercante stepped in and called off the fight at 42 seconds of the ninth round.

"It was somewhat of a vindication for Cotto, who had endured a pair of strange beatings at the hands of Antonio Margarito and pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao, who watched the fight at ringside. AP

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In the meantime, grab a bucket of San Mig Light with your barkadas, all kain for some tasty concoctions or dance till the break of dawn! With San Mig Light, always get ready for a revitalize-refueling moment.

Drosselmeyer tops Belmont Stakes

NEW YORK—DROSSELMEYER seized the lead in the stretch to pull off an upset in the Belmont Stakes and give Hall of Fame trainer Bill Mott his first win in a Triple Crown race.

Ridden by Kent Desormeaux, Dr. Drosselmeyer paid $26.20 for every $2 ticket. Flat Out finished second, 1¼ lengths ahead of Dublin, and Jackson Bend was third.

Drosselmeyer also gave jockey Mike Smith his first Belmont win on his 11th attempt.

The 3-year-old colt, owned by Wheelhar Farm, ran the 1½ miles in 2:31.37. Joe Bulgheroni stock was the 9-5 favorite for trainer Nick Zito in the 13-horse field.

With neither Kentucky Derby winner Super Saver nor Preakness winner Lookin At Lucky in the field, the Belmont looked to be a matchup of classic runners-up—Jo Jo Rose from the Derby, Pleasant Colony from the Preakness.

Flat Out took the lead from the start, but couldn't hold off Drosselmeyer in the stretch and finished third. Jo Jo Rose, who was trained by Nick Zito, was never in contention and finished ninth in the 12-horse field. Pleasant Colony, also trained by Zito, was the second choice at 3-1. AP

Bynum to play through pain as Lakers seek 2-0 cushion

LOS ANGELES—ANDREW BYNUM'S INjured right knee continues to swell but he still play through the pain barrier to help the Los Angeles Lakers tighten their grip on the NBA Finals against the Boston Celtics in Sunday's Game Two.

The seven-foot center contributed 13 points and six defensive rebounds for the NBA champions as they overpowered Boston, 102-89, in the series opener on Thursday, just three days after having fluid removed from his knee.

Although the fluid remained within 24 hours and he requires one-and-a-half hours of treatment before games, Bynum knows his scoring presence is sorely needed by the Lakers.

"I'm going to play no matter what," the 22-year-old said responses after a practice session on Saturday at the Lakers' El Segundo base. "I've made that decision already.

"It's important for me to go out and get easy buckets for us, just protect our rebounds and really understand how I can beat this team going out and getting in an open position, shooting over the top, defensively taking up space, clogging the lane and being able to help out like that.

BYNUM

"On Monday we're going to review our weekend and be able to really understand the energy they're going to come out with because they realize going down 2-0 will be catastrophic."

The Lakers and Celtics are competing for the NBA title in a best-of-seven series which shifts back to Boston for Games Three, Four and Five.

Asked if his right knee was deteriorating, Bynum replied:

"It's getting a little bit more swollen day in and day-out but treatment kind of suppresses it and keeps it to a level of where we can handle it." Reuters

Capello takes no chances, will use starters in friendly

STUTTGART, SOUTH Africa—Despite losing Ric Ferdinand to a tournament-ending injury in training, England coach Fabio Capello has no plans to rest key players for the team's final World Cup warmup match.

England takes on South African Premier League side the Platinum Stars—who are based near Rustenburg training camp—on Monday, with Capello keen to observe his planned starters for Saturday's World Cup opener against the United States.

"I have to play all the players that will play against the USA for 45 minutes or 60 minutes," Capello said. "I don't know if it is a major risk. I think sound. We have to be careful about injuries but we have to prepare for that game.

"I know what can happen [with injuries], but that is the job. What do you do? Swim and not play? You have to train. Sometimes you try to be careful and it still doesn't work."

Monday's friendly is the last chance for Capello to test a new central defensive pairing after Rio Ferdinand's knee injury in training last week. Ferdinand's injury leaves Capello's options are Ledley King, Jamie Carragher, Matthew Upson or Michael Dawson, who was flown to South Africa as a replacement for Ferdinand. AP

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Editor Raul C. Pangalangan • Assistant Editor Carrie S. Martinez

BUSINESS

Vol. 5

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GSIS poises suit against Finance execs

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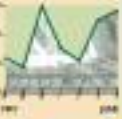

STOCK MARKET
June 4, 2010
▲ 1.82

STOCK MARKET

Wall St. plunge seen weighing down stocks

A BEAR OPENING IS EXPECTED for local stocks this week following Friday's bloodbath on Wall Street on jitters over a potential debt default by Hungary, the latest reminder of a European fiscal crisis.

Though there is strong technical and fundamental support, the local stock market will likely be weighed down by the 323.21-basis point or 3.1% percentage point drop in the Dow Jones Industrial Index on Friday after officials from Hungary admitted that economic conditions in their country were grim and that default talks were real.

Last week, the main share Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 0.21 percent to 3,267.56, as investors bet favorably ahead of the proclamation of a new President as well as follow-through buying inspired by good

BIZNEWS B1-4

Planned sale of 100-hectare FTI complex

By Michelle V. Rorra

CEBU CITY—THE OUTGOING CHIEF OF THE Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has threatened to file a complaint before the Ombudsman against officials of the Department of Finance over the planned sale of the government's 100-hectare property in Taguig City.

GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia alleged that the move of the DOF to talk with a private firm for the sale of the property which houses the Food Terminals Inc. complex, and to ignore the proposal of the GSIS to buy the same asset was anomalous.

In a briefing here, Garcia stressed that the GSIS had formally submitted an offer as early as last year to buy the property for P7 billion. He said GSIS was willing to buy it in cash. However, he lamented that the DOF considered the offer too low and turned it down.

Garcia said officials led by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves were urging a private sector firm to buy the property even at a slightly higher price than the P7-billion offer of GSIS to avoid controversies.

"We [GSIS] submitted our offer way earlier. Why would they enter into talks with another party without first negotiating with us [GSIS]," Garcia said. He noted that GSIS would have been willing to make its offer flexible.

"What is the difference between our [GSIS'] money and that of the private sector? The only difference I can see is that whatever the private sector spends would not be subject to audit by the COA (Commission

GSIS B-6

Mindanao power supply seen stabilizing by end-July

By Amy R. Remo

THE POWER SUPPLY SITUATION IN MINDANAO is expected to finally stabilize by mid-July as the hydroelectric power plants on the island begin to generate bigger capacities due to the onset of the rainy season, according to the National Grid Corporation of the Philippines.

Documents from the NGCP showed that the Agus and Pulangi hydroelectric power plants were generating 280 megawatts (MW) as of last Friday out of its rated capacity of more than 900 MW.

NGCP said this was due to the increase in the water elevation in Lake Lanao, which stood at 699.07 meters above sea level (masl) as of last week. However, this was still below the critical level of 699.15 masl.

For the hydropower facilities to generate at their maximum capacities, the water level in Lake Lanao should be more than 700 masl, NGCP added.

The generating capacity of the power plants as of last Friday was an improvement compared to that of the past few months when these hydropower facilities were generating only 60 to 180 MW, or about 10 percent of the plants' total capacity of 994 MW.

With more electricity being produced, the power supply deficit in the Mindanao grid has fallen to 291 MW as of June 5, data from the NGCP showed. This was an improvement compared to the huge supply gaps that reached more than 500 MW a few

MINDANAO B-9

Is mining growth inclusive?

DID YOU KNOW THAT WITH the wealth lying in our country's abundant mineral resources—placed at around P47 trillion—we can fund the entire government's current level of expenses for 30 years? Or pay for our total public debt more than 10 times over? Our country is considered the fifth most minerally endowed in the world, having 9 million hectares of mineral rich lands with established reserves of 13 known metallic and 29 non-metallic resources spread across the country. We are reportedly ranked globally as the third most endowed in gold, fourth in copper, fifth in nickel and sixth in chromite deposits.

Growth driver

It is with this knowledge that mining proponents have been pushing for all-out development of the industry, amid strong resistance from environmental groups. Foreign mining firms have long been eager to get a piece of the action. The current government has made it its policy to actively invite domestic and foreign investments into the industry, to mining indeed the country's hope to get out of poverty? Can it indeed be to the Philippines as petroleum has been to oil-rich nations such as Brunei and most Middle Eastern countries?

There is no doubt that mining is a potentially big contributor of rapid economic growth, especially in light of the industry's recent growth performance. Last year, while economic growth was being held back by the global financial crisis and our overall performance barely grew by 1 percent, the mining industry defied the slowdown and surged by more than 21 percent. As such, it was the fastest growing industry in the Philippine economy in 2009.

Non-inclusive growth?

With the economy's recent growth having failed to translate into commensurate job generation and poverty reduction for Filipino families, might achieving high rates of economic growth via mining no longer be good enough. Development discussions nowadays have the need for us to pursue both high and inclusive growth, which the Asian Development Bank (ADB) defines simply as growth with equal opportunities.

Can mining provide growth that is inclusive as well? Will there be broad participation in and benefits from the industry's rapid growth? Answering these questions requires we look at how much employment would result from growth in the industry and (2) how much mining growth would spill over to other industries in the economy through its backward and forward linkages. That is, how much of other domestic industries' outputs are used directly or indirectly in mining (backward linkages), and how much of its outputs are used directly or indirectly by other domestic industries (forward linkages)? And because foreign companies are prominent if not dominant in mining, one must additionally ask: How much of the wealth extracted by the industry will actually accrue to Filipinos?

Weak linkages

The Input-Output Table of the Philippine economy produced by the National Statistical Coordination Board provides an enabling framework to answer these questions. This is a matrix showing how much of each industry's outputs are used as inputs by other industries, apart from the primary inputs labor and capital. In a simpler, more generalized, manner, it is not that how labor as well as low-output prices are consumed. Whereas labor accounts for an average of 28.7 percent of the value of output economy-wide, it only makes up 13.3 percent in mining—and the ratio has been falling over time with increased mechanization. In backward linkages, mining comes out having less than half (0.46) of the average across all industries. Forward linkages are likewise weak, with a forward linkage index of 0.82 (indicating forward linkages also well below the average across industries). This is no surprise, given that much of the industry's output is exported in primary form (e.g., as ore mineral ore), with little further processing within the country. Thus, even as mining advocates like to argue that the products of mining find their way into many products we consume daily lives, these forward linkages are not occurring within the Philippines at this time. The direction for us is clear: We need to have more domestic processing and value-adding of mining outputs to widen the domestic linkages of the sector. Only then could growth in the sector be more inclusive. Until then, the fabulous wealth to be had from mining would line very few pockets.

But that's not all. Further substantiating its shortcomings, the legal framework governing foreign mining ventures provides very little clear to the little of the wealth extracted. Under the Mining Act of 1995 (RA 7942), foreign companies may engage in mining activities under two modes: A financial or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA). Under the MPAA, the state gets mainly 2 percent of the value of the minerals extracted, as excise tax. Under the original rules governing the FTAA, it gets more. The State received no share of the value of minerals extracted by foreign firms, but was limited to the small base required of any firm. It was only in 2007 that Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes revised the situation by issuing Department Administrative Order 2007-13 requiring the government share of net mineral revenues for the State. But it did not apply to some $50,000 hectares of mineral lands already granted to foreign firms before.

And we haven't even begun to talk about social and environmental issues yet.

Comments and reactions at cielito@habito.net.

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Meralco in tie-up talks with power-generation firms

Keen on acquiring stakes in privatized facilities of Napocor

By Amy S. Roxas

MANILA ELECTRIC CO., THE country's biggest power distributor, is hoping to seal a deal within the year with several prospective companies to augment its planned venture in the power generation business.

In an interview, Meralco chief operating officer Jose D. de Jesus said the power companies that wanted to have a partnership with the distribution utility included those that had acquired power plants previously owned by state-run National Power Corp.

However, he declined to identify the companies since discussions were still ongoing until no firm commitments have been made yet.

Depending on the outcome of the discussions, a possible tie-up may be in the offing either within the year or by 2011, De Jesus said.

Aside, Meralco has formed a committee to validate and review to sell the geothermal plants to the power-generation companies for the planned partnership.

Meralco earlier disclosed plans of initially acquiring a stake in existing power plants to take care of the utility's growing client base or, spokesmen.

For the long term, Meralco is also looking into putting up its own greenfield power plants as possible new sources of electricity.

The distribution utility has been earmarking its own power plant in Luzon, saying the regulatory leeway that allows it to buy up to 80 percent of the electricity it sells from affiliates.

At present, Meralco sees only half of this headroom is free from affiliate power-generation companies up to 1,200 megawatts. This is the portion being sourced from the power plants of the Lopez family.

De Jesus stressed the need to have new power plants due to the growing electricity demand in Luzon. He estimated that if there were no facilities that would be put up, Metro Manila and some provinces in Luzon might experience power shortages by 2011.

Documents from the Department of Energy showed that from 2010 to 2030, Luzon needed additional capacities of 13,908 MW. However, estimated power projects for Luzon during the period are estimated to possess only 6,008 MW.

Meralco has designated Oscar Reyes, former president of Pilipinas Shell, as chief energy adviser who will be responsible for Meralco's new business segments such as power generation and Meralco Inc in charge of existing subsidiaries and core support groups.

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STAMP

Solar power players seek gov't support

By Abigail L. Ho

COMPANIES IN engaged in the solar energy business are bullish about the prospects for the industry to be seeing even, with some saying global growth can reach as much as 30 percent this year, but urged the incoming government to provide more support for the local industry.

Fitel Philex Solar Corp. chief executive Inez Ladrica said his company alone grew 10-40 percent in the first six months and was projected to expand by as much as 50 percent by the end of the year.

"The industries of where the market for solar is going, [are] very bullish," he said in a recent briefing.

Fitel Philex is a joint venture between the Lopez-led First Philippine Holdings Corp. and Japanese Philippine Manufacturing Ltd., the local arm of global solar energy giant SunPower Corp.

Another company that sees immense growth in the solar industry this year and in the coming years is Japanese electronics and home appliance manufacturer Sharp Corp.

Sharp Philippines Corp. president and general manager Jerome Shimomura said that by 2012, the company's solar panels should account for about 7 percent of its total sales in the country.

The company's biggest local customer to date, he said, was Cagayan Electric Power and Light Co. Inc. (Cepalco).

Sharp Philippines provided the photovoltaic (PV) modules for the Mindanao power distributor's megawatt PV power plant, which cost a total of $5.3 million to build.

Shimomura said Sharp Philippines has not yet gotten any other projects as big as Cepalco for its solar panels, but was trying to get contracts for bigger installations.

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BUSINESS

Pru Life unit profit up 120%

By Dawn L. Lucas

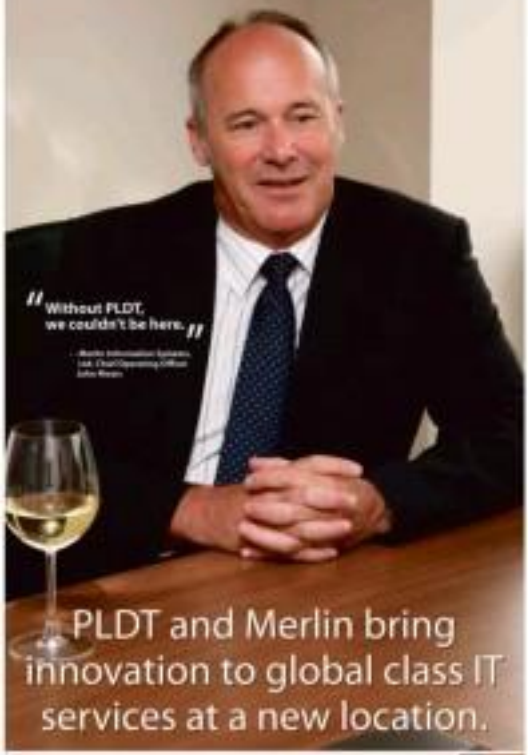
THE LOCAL UNIT of UK-based financial services group Prudential Plc reported a sharp spike in revenues for the first quarter as it capitalized on the recovery of financial markets around the world with a larger sales force.

In a statement released Friday, Pru Life UK said its sales for the first three months of 2010 stood 120 percent higher than the figure it reported during the same period last year.

Pru Life UK president and CEO Peter Cosmos said that the market recovery released growth also enabled the group's performance of unit-linked funds, which has restored investor confidence. During this period, the insurer's sales force was also able to introduce "innovative" new products.

"We've spent much of the last nine months planning and executing significant investments, which have resulted in dynamic growth in our agency force," Cosmos said. "We've managed to license about 40 percent more agents in the last six months."

CREATING THE MAGIC AT MERLIN



PLDT and Merlin bring innovation to global class IT services at a new location.

PLDT Senior Relationship Manager Jolenna Cuneg, British Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines Finance Chairman Leslie Bolton, MMIP CEO Rose Sales, Manila Information Systems Phils. Country Head Aileen Santos Dee, UK Trade and Industry Director British Embassy Harsh Pegu, Manila Information Systems, Ltd. Chief Operating Officer John Mears, CICT Chairman Ray Anthony Rosas Chua III, CICT Exec. Mrs. Ibrahim, OPTEL Ltd. Managing Director Ken Tolliday, and PLDT Vice President and Head of SMART Enterprise Business Group Cecy Hernandez.

Manila Information Systems Philippines Ltd has steadily grown into a name valued and trusted by world giants such as Ryan Air, TeleAtlas, GE Healthcare and DHL, when it comes to positioning, IT services, and the design and implementation of technology solutions. The company aims to drive down the cost of clients' IT support, " in the most innovative way imaginable" www.misgl.com).

At the grand launch of the brand new Manila offices at Makati's BPO precinct in Taguig city recently, Manila's new offices overflowed with champagne and a sumptuous buffet, along with warm, heartfelt congratulations from gathered friends and guests.

The 90-Day Miracle

CEO John Mears welcomed them all in a room overlooking the vast Philippine Army grounds. "We always wanted to be a service organization, even back when we started out in 1991, when mobile phones were just coming into use, and the word 'laptop' and a term used to classify Dean Daughters' 9th cat! remember, IT outsourcing just did not exist. So it is selective outsourcing. We take away pain points for our clients. If there are issues they can't cover, we'll take over. We provide customer support in 11 different languages, and we provide IT infrastructure support."

Before unveiling a road to congratulate Merlin on its opening, DPTEL's Ken Tolliday gave special mention to PLDT in his speech: "This was pulled together in 90 days it's part of a miracle. Merlin now has a global-class contact center platform, and an MPLS (Multi Protocol Label Switching) network that's as good as anybody's in the world, thanks to PLDT. MPLS facilitates all types of data traffic. It makes it easy to make 'virtual links' between distant nodes along the PLDT network.

CEO John Mears later shared how PLDT and Merlin worked together from the very beginning. "PLDT was not provided at our previous location (Ortigas) and moving here, Digiglo we have an MPLS global network for the whole company. PLDT also provided our ISO, the last local telephone lines. Without what PLDT provided, we couldn't be here."

Aileen Santos Dee was happy to share her thoughts on the SMART Blackberry. "Having a gadget with you where you can view all your emails and correspond with your clients internationally is very helpful."

"Beside the Manila traffic!" interjected John Mears, with a twinkle in his eye.

High Traffic? No Problem.

In line with enabling a smoother flow of Merlin's data and voice traffic, PLDT will install backbones for Merlin through the BoneDrive voice solution which works similarly to a PABX. For John Mears, this means Merlin will soon be enjoying different kinds of international and hosted calls. "We have a global switch that manages calls from the UK, Hungary, or into the Philippines, but in the event of any outage or failure, we need another solution that can operate reliably and consistently... BoneDrive is going to work alongside our global system... we see it as an emergency solution next to our fail solution, so we can guarantee customers 24/7 coverage."

"We are likewise proud and honored to witness the remarkable growth of Merlin's leadership in the burgeoning outsourcing sector," says Ana Hernandez, Vice President and Head of SMART Enterprise Business Group of PLDT, " as their principal technology partner, we can only commit to further enable them with the innovation and dedication to service that are among the common traits of market leaders in any endeavor."

BUSINESS

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2nd of 3

RP joins list of countries targeted by cyber attacks

Kaspersky: Malicious software used to steal sensitive info

By Paolo G. Montecillo

LISBOA, CYPRUS—THE LACE of anti-cyber crime legislation in countries in the Asia-Pacific region has increased the risk of computer users in the Philippines falling victim to malicious viruses.

Malicious software that can steal sensitive information—ie, clashing credit card numbers and e-mail passwords—that can be used to access bank accounts and other financial information has become more prevalent in the age of the Internet.

Top 20 countries

In its first quarter report on information security threats, Russian-based computer security company Kaspersky Labs said 20 countries like the Philippines, **where more and more financial** transactions were being done on electronic platforms like mobile phones—and where anti-cybercrime legislation has yet **to be passed...users were at** greater risk.

The report, released at the Security Analyst Summit here, showed the Philippine joining the list of 20 countries most targeted by cyber attacks in the first quarter of the year.

As the 19th country on the list, and one of six coming from Asia-Pacific, the report said about 1.11 percent of all cyber attacks reported around the world were directed to the Philippines.

"A quarter of the most targeted countries are located in Asia, where the Internet is developing at a rapid pace," Kaspersky said in its report.

On top of that, "legislators and law enforcement agencies aren't always able to keep up with the speed of development."

"Combine that with the deteriorating economic conditions and the result is a breeding ground for cyber criminals," the report said.

Other Asian countries on the list are China, which topped the list, Vietnam (ranked 5th), Malaysia (7th), Thailand (10th) and Indonesia (20th).

In the Philippines, anti-cyber crime legislation is still pending in Congress. The lower chamber passed House Bill No. 5794, which was co-authored by 21 representatives, on the third and final reading in January.

Kinds of attacks

Once signed into law, it will prohibit the use of computers for illegal access, illegal interception, system and data interference, computer fraud, cyber

to B6

Caticlan shakedown

BIZ BUZZ
By the staff

LIKE WE PREDICTED A FEW days ago, there has been a resurgence of media attacks on the P3.5-billion project to extend the runway in Caticlan to one that could accommodate bigger aircraft (and do away with those inconvenient diversions to Kalibo airport every time the wind blows the wrong way).

That the onslaught did come—via no less than six "column hacks" and a few other news items in various national publications—was not surprising. What was surprising was the timing of the attacks, coming as the heads of San Miguel Corp.'s acquisition of a 51-percent stake in the consortium are shoveling the project.

According to our sources, the media campaign anchored on supposedly environmental concerns was being managed by a low-key public relations practitioner who has a substantial budget in order to maintain secrecy and discipline among his cronies.

More importantly, we learned that emissaries had approached SMC asking that it buy out the interest of a rival airport project on a nearby island almost at the same time the negative campaign commenced. Talk about using the cover of environmentalism as cover for a multibillion-peso shakedown. —Dante L. Lucas

Where is the love?

THE DISPUTE that led to the severing of almost half a century of ties between Liberty Flour Mills and US-based General Mills Inc. is—as most disputes go—all about the money. In particular, it is about the royalties that Liberty pays to General Mills for the right to produce and sell the latter's Gold Medal brand locally.

According to our sources, **General Mills asked Liberty to** pay higher royalties (from 2 percent to 3.5 percent during their last contract negotiations five years ago). Liberty negotiated to point and paid up. The most recent round of negotiations, however, proved to be a shock to the management of the Filipino firm. General Mills supposedly sent down a draft document reducing the contract period from five to only three years, and further raising the royalty rate to 8 percent.

No longer feeling the love from their erstwhile US partners, the Liberty Flour guys decided to simply walk away... much to the surprise of some General Mills managers. —Dante L. Lucas

The next BSP chief?

THOUGH it is still a year away (where the term of incumbent Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando "Nan" Tetangco Jr. expires, talks are rife as to who presumptive President-elect Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III will likely pick as the country's chief monetary authority and banking regulator.

Sources who claim to be "in the know" say that one of the strong contenders is Aurelio Montinola III, president of Bank of the Philippine Islands, who is hitting the retirement age of 60 (surprise, surprise) in two years. Although he didn't have to seek employment elsewhere given his family's influential fortune (the Montinolas own TEU and Southeast Asian Cement), he chose to become a professional manager working for the Ayalas. Will he be the next Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) president to become the top banking regulator after the late Rafael Buenaventura? Some say it is not implausible that he will accept a push toward public service as "it runs in the family." [But old money is necessary of course. Of course it would have been a different story if outside-in-law Jaime Madrigal had won the presidential race.

But some Aquino advisers are also suggesting the reappointment of Tetangco, who could thus be the first governor to get a second term since the new BSP charter was passed. Under his leadership, the BSP pursued an array of tough banking reforms initiated by his predecessor. And it was due to these reforms that Philippine banks had emerged relatively unscathed from the 2008 financial crisis. —Jerry C. Dandan

No love lost

THE RELUCTANCE of the Ho-

to B23 to

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Wall Street still shaken by weak US data

A BROKER appears to be affected by numbers from the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange. The drop in the Dow Jones industrial average last Friday was the third-worst slide of the year.

Headline-driven market said to drive massive sell-offs

NEW YORK—WALL STREET WORKED TO LIMIT ITS LOSSES over the past week amid worries about economies in Europe and China, but Friday's weak US job numbers hit home, leaving shaken investors in need of a tonic.

"This is a headline-driven market environment," said Frederic Dickson, chief market strategist at IA Davidson & Co. "Positive headline news can drive vacuum upward market moves just as easily as negative headline news drives sudden market sell-offs."

All three major indices capped the holiday-shortened week Friday with plunges of more than 3 percent in response to the worse-than-expected jobs report. The markets on Monday are closed.

The Dow Jones Industrial average closed at 9,931.22, down 2.93 percent from last Friday.

The tech-rich Nasdaq composite fell 1.66 percent over the week, to 2,219.17.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index, a broad measure of the market, lost 2.23 percent at 1,064.88.

"In the world of risk, it was looking like the US economy was going to turn out to be the most stable, but such a job report that disappoints expecta-

WALL STREET B-9

Buyout barons eye Nielsen's $1.75-B IPO

NEW YORK—NIELSEN'S PLANNED $1.75-billion IPO will be keenly watched by its core demographic: buyout barons.

Six private equity firms—including its three biggest: KKR, Blackstone, Carlyle and TPG—own the business, which dominates the market for tracking media viewership.

The question is whether the new Nielsen can attract similar audience awareness from stock market investors.

If it can, the business led by former General Electric standard-bearer Jimmy Calhoun may chalk up decent returns for its current investors. They injected about $3 billion of equity into the $10-billion buyout of the Dutch-listed business formerly called VNU.

An IPO that comes close to doubling their money would help dispel criticism that buyout firms are nothing more than overpaid financial engineers.

That's not an unreasonable goal. Under Calhoun, the company has dispensed of assets, focused on its core ratings business and squeezed out costs. Adjusted earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization rose to around $1.3 billion last year from $879 million four years ago. Revenue has grown about 2 percent annually since 2007.

Moreover, as the industry standard for television and cable ratings information, Nielsen has traditionally appeared a business with high barriers to entry. And its penetration of developing markets is still small, accounting for just around 17 percent of revenue.

But media usage habits are changing. Competitor comScore, for instance, is better positioned to measure eyeballs gravitating to online media like YouTube and Facebook.

In its prospectus, Nielsen also notes the risk that multiple competitors are looking to measure TV audiences digitally using set-top box technology.

Given these risks and opportunities, what's Nielsen worth?

At 11 times Ebitda, a hefty 20 percent premium to GfK of Germany and Ipsos of France to reflect Nielsen's dominant position, the company would sport a $14.5-billion enterprise value. Net of debt, that's just under $6 billion for the equity—nearly doubling the consortium's investment.

Reuters

US financial stocks turn more volatile

CHICAGO/NEW YORK—FINANCIAL STOCKS may face more volatility in coming weeks as a sweeping overhaul of the US financial industry looks set to pass in early July.

Options strategists say there are several synergies investors can use to play the pending financial regulation, ranging from the conservative to the speculative.

"There has been concern that the pending congressional reconciliation bill would have further detrimental pressure on the financial sector before the fourth of July holiday weekend," said Ivan Pollman, director of derivative investment strategy at broker-dealer Wolfe Capital Group in New York.

The sector has fallen more than the broad market in the last several weeks. The S&P Financial Index is down about 13.8 percent since April 26, more than the S&P 500, which is down 10.7 percent in that time.

Volatility in exchange-traded funds that track the financial sector also rose over the past month.

The legislation is being shaped into final form by a US Senate-House panel, and with the final language in the bill not determined, it leaves open the possibility of surprises for investors.

Reuters

1
Prestigious global survey

4
Awards garnered in 2010
Best Insurer in Asia
Best Insurer in the Philippines
Best Insurer - General Property & Casualty - Asia
Best Insurer - Employer Liability - Asia

3
Pioneer companies
Committed to serve you

We are honored by the results of the annual Euromoney Insurance Survey. For the second consecutive year, Pioneer is the Best Insurer in the Philippines. Thank you for your continued trust.

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AGC Reference No. PI 10-0022-7107

Gov'ts worldwide face 'extreme' deficit dilemma

Expert: Affected nations need to bite the bullet

Europe's Q4 selloff may boost rally

AIG kicks off sponsorship for Manchester United

Wall Street still shaken

Wal-Mart rethinks global thrust

Because you asked for it, we're gearing up for BDO Deals on Wheels' Second Run!

Don't miss the BDO Deals on Wheels' second run.

BDO Deals on Wheels
Mall Tour Schedule

June 17 to 21
SM City Cebu
SM Mandaue

June 17 to 20
Robinsons Mall, Ipoh, Perak

June 18 to 20
SM City Sorsogon
SM City Naga
SM City Legazpi
SM City Iriga
SM City Masbate
SM City Roxas
SM City Dumaguete
SM City Bacolod
SM City Iloilo
SM City Tacloban, Leyte
SM City Ormoc

June 19 to 21
Robinsons Galleria, Quezon City

BDO

Auto Loan

Guaranteed Low rates!
Get FREE Gas worth P1,000*

June 17-20	June 19-20	June 20-27
MALL OF ASIA		

BUSINESS

AUCTION SALE

PRIME PROPETIES

OF

THE PROPERTY FORUM PHILS. INC.

ITEM NUMBER	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	LAND AREA	FLOOR AREA	MINIMUM BID PRICE
ANTIPOLO					
TPF 025-A001	Unit 24-C Tower St. Camia Greenpark Subdivision, Brgy. Pagsanghan, Cainta	2 STRY HOUSE & LOT	69 sqm.	81sqm	P1,200,000
LAS PINAS					
TPF LP0002	Lot 6 Blk. 4 Libay St., Verdant Sunday Subd., Pamplona 3 (near Golden Bamboo Station)	2 STRY HOUSE & LOT	300 sqm.	250 sqm.	P1,500,000
TPF LP0003	L 2-A-1-H-2 cor. Alabang Zapote Rd. (near Zapote Junction)	7 STRY COMMERCIAL BLDG.	788 sqm.		P15,000,000
MAKATI					
TPF MK1006	Phase Condo, Sandiao St. (near Rufino Hist. Dist. Bldgs.)	COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL CONDO	28.13 sqm. 34.67sqm. 39.10 sqm.		P970,930 P1,046,220 (NET/LSO)
MANILA					
TPF MNL007	No. 210 Bernard St., Sta Mesa (near Electric Quirino High Sch.)	2STRY COMM. W/ 4 DOORS APARTMENT	353.6 sqm.		P6,000,000
MUNTINLUPA					
TPF MUN006	No. 100 Lot 22 Blk 29, Everlasting Circle, BF South Greenheights Subd., Brgy. Putatan (near Sta. Rita's South Via Bora Cluh)	HOUSE & LOT	360 sqm.	236.50 sqm.	P2,500,000
TPF MUN005	No. 29 Narra St. corner Alley, Bicutan Homes Subd. (near Muntinlupa City Hall)	HOUSE & LOT	252 sqm.	44 sqm.	P2,000,000
PARANAQUE					
TPF PRQ010	Ribbon Ave. Brgy. Sun Valley (near Robinsons Supermarket & SM Bicutan)	12 CONGO UNITS 5 STRY COMM. BLDG. (Shell structure to be Subdivided)	2,089 sqm.		P16,000,000
TPF PRQ013	8099 Mahogany St. United Hts 7 (near Dr. Arcadio High School)	HOUSE & LOT	127 sqm.	284.75sqm	P1,850,000
TPF PRQ014	162 Lot 1-63 Blk4, Marian Park 2 Mahogany St. United Hts 1 (near Dr. Arcadio High School)	3 STRY T-DOOR APARTMENT	780 sqm.	282sqm.	P5,500,000
QUEZON CITY					
TPF QTL003	148 Bldg. AURORA BLVD. (Along Aurora Blvd near Ateneo and UP Diliman)	2 STRY COMM. BLDG. W/ 8 DOOR APARTMENT	900 sqm.	553.60 sqm.	P 14,000,000
TPF QC0015	LOT 5N, 20th Regional St., Gumamela Gardens Pasong Putol (Brgy. Holy Family) (near Sto Nino Church)	RESIDENTIAL LOT	450 sqm.		P2,000,000
TPF QC007a	111 Blk 4, Dona Rosario St. Novaliches (near Pison Mall)	RESIDENTIAL LOT	518 sqm.		P1,300,000
TPF QC0401a	Lot 2 C 1-E, Sisander Homes, Mac Leod Cor. Granville Homes, Brgy. Holy Spirit (near Visaya Ave.) Manila	HOUSE & LOT	689 sqm.		P3,500,000
TPF QC0401b	Lot No. Cluster A-39, Dall 149 Bahayang Pangarap Drive Brgy. Batasan Hills (near Phase No. 5) QC (Sahara)	RESIDENTIAL CONDO W/ PARKING	63 sqm.		P2,000,000
VALENZUELA					
TPF VAL011	KASIGLAHAN INC. NO. Brgy Ugong (near Arcadio Santos Ave., Sch.)	RESIDENTIAL LOT (no roads thing)	4,997sqm.		P1,000,000
LUZON					
BATANGAS					
TPF BAT016	LOT Blk 70 Lot 5 Countryside Estate Ph 3 Brgy. Sulsuran	RESIDENTIAL LOT	750sqm.		P750,000
BULACAN					
TPF BUL4019	No. 757 (Old Lot) Brgy. San Roque, San Rafael, Bulacan (near San Roque Elem. School)	HOUSE & LOT	1,100sqm.	297.13sqm.	P1,700,000
CAVITE					
TPF CVT020	LOT Blk 20 Dahlia Phase 2E Manila Southwoods Ph. 3 Brgy. Biclatan, Carmona (near Manila Southwoods Estate)	GOLF RSDL LOT	524sqm.		P950,000
TPF CVT021	Brgy. Calibuyo TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	SUBDIVISION LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (Subdivision Project) 23,640sqm.	Developer Project 10,845sqm.		P25,000,000
TPF CVT0002	Villa Ilaya, Brgy. Molino, Bacoor (near SM Bacoor & Bahayang Pag-Asa)	HOUSE & LOT	208 sqm. 162 sqm. 126 sqm.	208 sqm. 65 sqm. 109.5 sqm.	P4,872,000 P1,715,000 P3,225,000
LAGUNA					
TPF LGN002	Lot 9-D Plan LOT-9-D-1 Sto. San Vicente, San Pedro (near South Peak Subd.)	RESIDENTIAL LOT	48 sqm.		P300,000
TPF LGN013	Lot 23 Blk. 103 Ruby St. Laguna Bel-Air 1 Ph. 1 Brgy. San José, Sta. Rosa Laguna	1 STORY HOUSE & LOT	117 sqm.	80.80 sqm.	P1,900,000
TPF CDO007	Fuguchy Plant, Montalban Highway, Brgy Santolan (Sto Nicolas Alamino, Laguna (near Honda Cars Antipolo)	RESIDENTIAL LOT	110,759 sqm.		P51,291,972
PANGASINAN					
TPF PGN034	No. 983 Bonuan Binloc, Dagupan City (near Lasema Coast Resort)	2 STORY HOUSE & LOT	210 sqm.	140.75 sqm.	P1,500,000
TAGAYTAY					
TPF TGY008	Woodborough Subdivision Tagaytay City (near Kaay Condo)	RESIDENTIAL LOT	280 sqm.		P1,800,000
MINDANAO					
ZAMBOANGA					
TPF ZMB005	Lot 6-7 Blk1 Sampaguita St. Cuenta Homes Subd. RFM, Brgy Ayala	HOUSE & LOT	400 sqm.	150 sqm.	P750,000

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EU woes may curtail US luxury expansion

Few brands seen to lean on stronger dollar

NEW YORK - EUROPEAN EXPANSION plans for top US luxury brands may stall in the short term over fears of a simmering debt crisis on the continent.

Some of those American names lashed to their overseas shoppers in boom times like during the worst of the recession, as brand recognition and a weak dollar made their merchandise more attractive.

But as Greece's problems spill over to its neighbors, fears over declining consumer demand would give those companies pause before opening new outlets, executives told the Reuters Global Luxury Summit this week that.

"There's still another shoe to drop," said William Susman, chief operating officer of boutique investment bank Flexstone Inc.

"When the economies throughout Europe are going to go through in the next six to 18 months, I think, will be dramatic: it will impact France, Germany and the northern Scandinavian countries as well. So I don't think that that money is over yet."

While a weaker euro may make it easier for US retailers to court European markets from a cost perspective, it also puts a damper on sales. Chains that may pull back store openings include teen retailer Abercrombie & Fitch, Brooks Brothers and Polo Ralph Lauren, Susman said.

Rich Europeans are cutting back on splurges, said Max Heine, chief executive at Oscar de la Renta.

"The commonwealth countries were a major market for the company that has steadily dried up. There are some players in international markets where 'nowhere, not just for Oscar de la Renta, but for luxury brands has really come to a halt," he said.

However, some brands are hoping to make the best of a stronger dollar after investing their price strategies.

Coach, maker of upscale handbags, recently said it would expand into Western European countries such as Spain, Portugal and Britain.

"The timing could not be better than when the economies are weak," Chief Executive Lew Frankfort told Reuters.

Oscar de la Renta is looking to set up shop in London sometime soon, taking advantage of the stronger dollar.

"For a firm like ours that is principally a dollar-denominated firm, things have become more affordable in London," Heine said.

Reuters

UMC Appoints COO

Universal Motors Corp., the exclusive assembler and distributor of Nissan Light Commercial Vehicles in the country has appointed Ms. Elizabeth H. Lee to the position of Chief Operating Officer. Ms. Lee previously served as the company's Executive Vice President. UMC distributes the popular Nissan Urvan, Navara Sport Utility Truck, Patrol Super Safari, and the recently launched Murano Z51. The company's sales have grown over 35% for the first 4 months and looks forward to continued robust growth for the year.

Venus Navalta joins ZenithOptimedia Philippines as Chairman

ZenithOptimedia today announced that Venus Navalta will join there in the new role of Chairman of their Philippine office. Susan Dar Santos continues as General Manager. Venus will start on 8th June.

As Chairman, Venus will be responsible for all aspects of ZenithOptimedia Philippines business, with specific focus on furthering relationships with clients, mentoring and developing everyone in the office as well looking at new ways to drive business in line with the ZenithOptimedia ROI proposition. As a member of the ZPAC regional board, she will also work closely with regional management in the marketing and positioning of ZenithOptimedia, as well as in developing new business opportunities.

Prior to this new opportunity, Venus worked for many years as the head of Universal McCann in the Philippines, until she left last year to spend more time on a number of social advocacy projects.

Philip Talbot CEO ZO APAC commented on this appointment "Venus and I met a little by chance, but we got talking and realised we shared many passions and beliefs, both professionally and socially. It didn't take me long to realise that with her experience and qualities Venus would be a great asset for us." Philip Talbot added." ZenithOptimedia has been hugely successful as a network in the region in recent years, and Venus' presence in the Philippines will further boost our operations. I am very much looking forward to working with Venus and I know she will be a huge asset to us both locally and throughout the ZenithOptimedia network"

Venus Navalta commented that "secure in the knowledge that I have led a successful agency for many years, I was careful in exploring the opportunities that came my way after UM. However, Phil's direct, hands-on approach piqued my curiosity to find out more. Aside from the shared values, the agency's growth and stable management team impressed me. I was excited to take the challenge of making ZO's office in the Philippines not just at par but one of their best offices in the world."

BUSINESS

Group to revive bid to 'sell' RP knowledge workers

Seeks P160M from gov't for global marketing campaign

By Abigail L. Ho

SEEKING TO CEMENTATE THE $1-BILLION investment that the industry needed to attract and its most competitive in the future, the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries of the Philippines Inc. will revive its proposal for a P160-million global marketing campaign to "sell" the Filipino knowledge worker.

Seipi chair Arthur Yuaqui told the group was in talks with the Business Processing Association of the Philippines, the co-proponent of the proposal, to resubmit the plan to the incoming administration.

"The problem is we don't have a national strategy and a technology roadmap. With the new government, we hope we can look at the long term. If we make these kinds of investments today, we can bring in the $3-billion or $5-billion investments that the industry needs to grow in the future," he said. "We're again having discussion with BPAP. We'll continue to push it. It's something we believe is very important to us."

Seipi and BSIC together with country partner Ian Smith & Saint-Philippines, Inc. [illegible] ought to get P300 million of the P160-million cost support fund (EDF) that Malacañang earmarked in late 2008 to help exporters stay afloat amid the recession.

Under the proposed campaign, ads about Filipino knowledge workers would be released in the United States, Japan, Western Europe, and Australia.

The ads would be placed on cable channels such as CNN and CNBC, as well as prominent publications such as Forbes, Fortune and Time Magazine.

"Even ad placement would be strategically timed to coincide with[illegible] and government roadshows.

Seipi and BPAP never got the funding for this, however, forcing the two groups to shelve the planned campaign.

The fund, however, with the entry of a new administration, Yuaqui said Seipi and BPAP would review the plan. Without government funding, it was impossible to carry out the project.

"The industry is willing to push the process and put the product out there, but we can't put actual money into it. We have shareholders, and it's difficult to justify why we have to spend for what the government should be doing for the industry. The best we can do is give our time and talent," he said.

$57-M ADB loan to help rural electric cooperatives

CEBU ELECTRIC INC. (CEBECO) administration is seeking a $57-million loan from the Asian Development Bank to upgrade and rehabilitate the distribution system of 18 rural electric cooperatives.

According to the Manila-based lender, the proposed MDA project is expected to reduce the system losses of these utilities and increase the distribution capacity for load growth.

The project is also targeted to improve the reliability of the electric cooperatives and help provide service to area electrified by cooperatives.

"The cost of electricity to the customer will be reduced as the final impact of the project. Further, the expected impact of the project is the attainment of a reliable and quality electric power delivery service to households and other customers, particularly to rural areas," ADB documents stated.

Amy R. Remo

New PNB head to focus on 3 bank growth areas

Treasury, remittances, credit cards

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER of Philippine National Bank, once the country's leading bank, aims to lead the financial institution back to its former glory and claim a spot among the top three local banks across major product lines.

In an interview with the bizweek, newly installed PNB president and CEO Eugene Acevedo said the bank could be among the country's top three in at least three areas—remittances, credit cards and treasury sales—within two years.

"The big local banks are doing a good job and we'd like to give them some competition, some healthy competition," said Acevedo, a treasury veteran who is fresh from an overseas stint at American financial giant Citibank, heading treasury operations in Hong Kong, Manila and Taiwan.

PNB, whose principal stockholder is tycoon Lucio Tan, is set to celebrate its centennial in six years. "My dream is for PNB to have gained being in celebrator shape. We should get the bank in a level by which we can be one of the leaders again; something similar to what we were in the past," he said.

Acevedo noted that PNB, previously a government financial institution, was not only the biggest Philippine bank in size in the past but was likewise at the forefront of innovation before it fell to reduced times.

"Therefore we have to bring all our businesses to that level—general and life insurance, remittances, corporate loans, investment banking, consumer loans, treasury sales, treasury distribution, credit cards. We want to be up there," Acevedo said. "We may not be number one, but we chose to do everything, but we want to be very close."

Once merged with Allied Bank, which has the same principal stockholder, PNB will become the fourth-biggest bank in terms of assets. The two banks have had sufficient practice in "functional" merging over the past two years and after the final merger approval, which is likely to happen within the year, Acevedo said it would be easier to start the actual consolidation of balances shown by January 2011.

Acevedo said he was planning to deploy PNB's vast distribution channel across the country as well as overseas to cross-sell products like bancassurance and credit cards to its more than two million customers. Likewise maximizing PNB's vast overseas footprint—the largest among Philippine banks—could more reinforce the move into positions in remittance channel, especially with a newer partnership with Western Union, which is seen very useful in areas where it has no presence.

"To me, the critical thing this year and next is to optimize our distribution channel. There are many more that we can sell to our customers. Obviously, we have simple loans and we're getting deposits. We'll expand that to include bancassurance, credit cards and many more," Acevedo said. "We just have to convert the volume base into of those going to the use of sales and distribution channel," he said.

Although PNB does not have the biggest branch network among local players, Acevedo said it has the widest reach in terms of geographical dispersal, which is also seen providing the bank a large base to tap for its treasury business. He aim is to expand PNB's market share in consumer banking to about 10 percent from less than 3 percent at present.

The treasury business, Acevedo's expertise, is a big contributor in PNB's turnaround in the near-term and will upgrade the quality of revenues. "I want a balanced treasury that's almost 50-50 percent risk taking and sales. Right now, treasury here is less sales, more trading and liquidity management."

Aside to improve cost efficiency, Acevedo also wants to sell off as much foreclosed assets as it can. "It's like us running a marathon and carrying a big backpack. We'll try to shed as much as we can so we can run faster."

PSBank sees ₱1.4-B net profit in 2010

PHILIPPINE BANKING DATA, THE third bank arm of the Metrobank group, expects another record year with net profit easily hitting ₱1.4 billion in 2010 despite the much improved domestic business confidence.

PSBank president Dennard Uanzin II said he was bullish about the prospects for this year especially given the smooth conduct of the automated national elections last May, which had removed the political uncertainties in the country.

"The Philippines now has a very positive story to tell," he said.

And while the succeeding quarters are seen slowing down from the stunning first quarter—both in terms of the overall domestic economy and bank industry performance—Uanzin said it would likely be a very good year for the sector.

In the case of PSBank, the minimum net profit expected for this year represents an increase of about 13 percent over the ₱1.24 billion bottomline booked last year.

The bank has projected a double-digit rise in consumer lending this year. Prospects are seen bright for the consumer business despite stiff competition.

Higher rates of homes and cars are seen boosting consumer lending, which constitutes a little over 70% percent of PSBank's portfolio.

Part of the strategy to reach out to consumers is to roll out more branches and automated teller machines across the country.

As of end-2009, PSBank had a network of 178 branches and 306 ATMs. Uanzin said the bank would likely scale up its branch network to about 200 in the next few years. Doris C. Dumlao

From page B1

GSIS poises suit against . . .

on Aug.31, while money to be spent by GSIS will be audited," Garcia said, insinuating that Ramos officials wanted to gain commissions over the sale of the property.

Garcia said the GSIS wanted to invest in the property to put its excess liquidity to good investment. He said GSIS intended to develop the asset into a mixed-used property by forming a joint venture with a real estate developer.

He said GSIS would benefit from investing in real estate than keeping most of its assets in securities investments, which he said were earning only 7 percent a year for the pension fund.

"Investing in this real estate could help GSIS generate around 40% percent in profit over the next four years. This will benefit our members," Garcia said.

Meanwhile, the DOF earlier said it had turned down the offer of GSIS because the price offered was low. The DOF said the government, which is trying to plug a gaping budget deficit, could earn much more than the ₱7 billion being offered by GSIS.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the DOF was in talks with a private sector firm, and that any offer would be subjected to a Swiss challenge.

The DOF is targeting to sell the PTI property within the year to help plug an estimated budget deficit of ₱295 billion for 2010.

Finance officials said the budget gap was expected to increase given the continued need for the government to pump prime the economy given the slow pace of the global economic recovery.

Wall St. . . .

From page B1

underlying economic fundamentals.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Peraro said that while the charts looked good for the Nikkei, the drop in Wall Streets on Friday might be too much to ignore. He said the market might be down at least today.

He said the market could pull back to as low as 3,370 or around a tenth from last week's close.

Ikuro-So Gru Ino, bank strategist Jonathan Ravelas said Friday's close suggested the market might still have room to test the 3,400-3,450 levels. Doris C. Dumlao

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Maybank

Enjoy music wirelessly

By Charles E. Bohol

MANY PEOPLE USE THEIR PERSONAL computers as their primary source for music, but they need to be near their desktops or laptops to be able to enjoy the tunes.

Bose's new SoundLink Wireless Music System was created to solve this challenge.

"The new SoundLink is for users device is take-a-crack at wireless music streaming at home. With Bose's audio credentials ... and superbly simple setup, this device is destined an energizing offer," says Wilson Sia of Elektra Marketing Corp., sole distributor of the brand here in the Philippines.

Bose made sure setting up the device a easy. Just plug the included USB dongle into the PC, and the speaker almost immediately streams your digital music collection. One may either play music from iTunes, Pandora, or any other Internet radio or music source.

Rechargeable, too

The fact that this device may also be powered by a rechargeable lithium-ion battery makes it easy for a user to carry it outside the house, playing the device even when there is no AC outlet available [up to 10 more distance or depending on well or Bose thickness and material].

At 17 cm high, 30.7 cm wide and 11.4-cm thick, this 6.4 kg (including battery) device has a solid construction that is built to withstand basic abuse.

Its relatively compact size belies its ability to fill up a room with impressive stereo sound.

"The new SoundLink features a proprietary acoustics package, which combines exclusive Bose waveguide speaker technology and novel system transducers to deliver room-filling, high-quality audio from a very small enclosure," explains Sia.

Features

Apart from its touch sensitive buttons to control volume, the PST 5000 device comes with an infrared remote control that operates power and volume, and can send transport control commands to most applications, allowing users to skip tracks or play/pause from a distance.

The SoundLink requires no additional software as it can immediately play whatever audio file you or he transmitted from the PC—no format issues to deal with.

As tested by this writer, the new SoundLink sounded great as it played back a variety of genres from my iTunes (even mid-running out the volume while transitioning to another room—down was no drop, feedback or version interference in the process).

It should be noted too, that the new SoundLink also features an auxiliary input for connecting additional audio sources like iPod, iPhone, MP3 player or CD player, so that device also makes for an excellent external speaker.

BOSE's SoundLink Wireless Music System

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intel CORE

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EMC changes how data centers work

Text and photos by Charles E. Bohol

IF YOU ADHERE HERE TO BE storing one of space with which to store images, video, music or other multimedia files in your computer, rest assured that the same thing is happening to everyone else in the world.

Interestingly, the industry is not sitting idle, doing its very best to solve this problem of handling our insatiable need for storage.

"Believe me, this early as humankind creates ever more electronic data, we are preparing the industry to be able to handle over 35 zettabyte bytes of digital information—exactly 35.2. Zettabytes, which experts have predicted the world will be dealing with 10 years from now," says Jim Goh, president of EMC Southeast Asia, during the information infrastructure solutions company's annual media summit.

For those who care to count, a zettabyte is 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 bytes—that is one followed by 21 zeroes.

Breach barrier

"By the end of this year, we are expected to breach the zettabyte barrier (inverse mate of digital information is estimated to be or 800 billion gigabytes)," says Goh. "This is why there is an industry move to improve the management of information considering that current data center environment is complex, inefficient, inflexible and costly."

In fact, Goh says, EMC has already begun restructuring as the company introduces a technology that gives firms "unlimited scalability" and virtually 24/7 uptime through its VPlex offering—a next-generation storage virtualization system that enables organizations to move data centers across vast distances.

Goh explains that VPlex allows customers to non disruptively move thousands of virtual machines and petabytes of information over thousands of kilometers, eliminating boundaries of physical storage and allowing information resources to be transparently pooled and shared over distance for new levels of efficiency, control and choice.

The ability to share, move and access large amounts of data regardless of location is a key advantage of VPlex's technology that EMC candidly calls its "teleporter" (paying homage to EMC executive's favorite sci-fi series Stelnic TV and film franchise, Star Trek).

Two now available

"Today's data center is an environment of iron, stranded, silo'ed and scarce, but a computer of multiple incompatible architectures that is difficult to manage. What EMC is developing is the next frontier are dynamic, cost-efficient, on-demand, and flexible data centers," says Jeff Nick, EMC CTO.

He explains that EMC has more than 20 years of expertise in designing, understanding and perfecting carrier-class distance and caching solutions.

"The VPlex is a core component of EMC's virtual storage vision and will drive storage what server virtualization has done to computing and will provide game changing levels of efficiency and flexibility. It's just one of our groundbreaking technology that is set to change the way data centers are designed and managed," added Nick.

DOH (above) says the company is working on a truly dynamic data center (pictured left).

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INFOTECH

Ideapad's time has come

By Raquel P Gomez

FROM THE TIME INTEL announced the availability of its new 2010 processors for desktops and notebooks, PC makers have been stocking up on products bearing the new processors that are touted to be extremely fast and energy efficient because of the 32 nm architecture, Hyper Threading and Turbo Boost technologies.

The new Lenovo Y460 Ideapad features the new Intel Core i5 CPU i5430M (hereinafter) clocked at 2.27 GHz. It has L2 and L3 cache of 512 KB and 3 MB and is equipped with AMD Mobility Radeon HD 5650 discrete graphics card.

What do all these figures and tech terms mean? For one, the Lenovo Ideapad is much faster than a laptop having an Intel Core 2 Duo processor clocked at a similar speed.

Apart from hyperthreading—the ability of two cores to work like they're four cores, and Turbo Boost, or the ability of a processor to meet high demands of computing needs, the new Intel processor has integrated a memory controller and graphics card within the processor package so data processes and transfers are much faster.

Since the Lenovo Y460 also features the 1 GB ATI graphics card or GPU, it is also worth mentioning that this laptop is intended not only for multimedia use but gaming as well.

The new AMD Mobility Radeon HD 5650 is a middle class GDR5 DirectX 11 graphics card for laptops. This GPU, according to notebookcheck.net, features a performance that is already sufficient for high details in nearly all DirectX 10 games. With this GPU, the Lenovo Y460 has a high screen resolution of up to 1366 x 768 pixels.

The Lenovo Y460 also features a design that will appeal to laptop enthusiasts or consumers who want a good priced Windows laptop at par with a MacBook—not only in performance but also in looks.

The Lenovo Y460 features a 14-inch high definition LED backlit display that is framed by a black piano finish highlighted by a subdued orange lining.

A nice design addition are the prominent pair of JBL speakers and the row of penny size lights coming from the upper above the keyboard that indicate laptop activities (battery, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi signal, etc.).

The two lights in the middle are to the hardware buttons which a user can slide a finger to immediately change screen backgrounds, zip or unzip the screen (so that the PC goes into lock mode immediately) or instantly launch items such as calculator, notepad or documents folder.

To save on energy use, the Lenovo Y460 features a "Switchable Graphics" option, where a user can either choose the high performance ATI Radeon GPU or Intel's power-saving GPU.

Weighing only 2.2 kg, the Lenovo Y460 comes installed with 64-bit Windows 7 Home Premium OS and other Lenovo software like OneKey Rescue, VeriMax, Energy Management Software and more.

Physical specs of this size looking but powerful laptop includes a 500 GB storage, a slim DVD+CD ROM drive, 8DMB port, multicard reader, a 1.3 MP camera, three USB ports, express card slot, eSATA+USB combo port, VGA port, LAN port and 4 GB DDR3 memory module that can be expanded up to 8 GB.

BUSINESS

SEE P. 3

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Franchising industry sees 30% growth in 2010

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOCAL FRANCHISING industry expects sales to grow between 25 and 30 percent this year to as much as P157 billion, driven by easy economic prospects and high consumer confidence.

Jacob Ang, chair emeritus of industry group Philippine Franchise Association (PFA), said last quarter's 7.3-percent gross domestic product growth bode well for the franchising industry for the rest of the year.

The 7-percent rise in remittances to $4.3 billion, which would fuel domestic consumption, was likewise a positive development for franchisors.

Considering these circumstances, he said the group's growth projection of 25-30 percent could even be "conservative."

PFA president Vicente Ondra Ortiz Jr. said the sentiment that overseas Filipino workers sent to their families have could very well be channeled to franchised businesses.

This would not only expand the current base of the franchising industry, but also encourage entrepreneurship and promote more employment, she added.

"This development will not only further boost consumption, but also prop up the establishment of the business sector to all the more residents as productive enterprise, particularly in the consumer-driven franchising industry," said Nobel Tria, PFA chair and Mail Boxes Etc. president.

BSP expects lower inflation this year

By Michelle V. Remo

THE INCREASE IN CONSUMER PRICES is not large enough to hit the 6-percent mark this year given favorable factors, which the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said included a strong peso, lower power rates and the drop in oil prices in the world market.

The BSP also cited a slower-than-anticipated expansion in money circulating in the economy, which the monetary authority credited to measures implemented earlier this year to curb inflationary pressures.

"Latest monthly [inflation] projections showed some downward trends relative to the projections we made in April," said BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo.

The National Statistics Office reported last week that the year-on-year inflation rate, which measures the increase in prices of goods and services consumed by average Filipinos, settled at 4.3 percent in May, slower than the 4.6 percent in April.

Earlier this year, the central bank said the annual inflation rate could move way past the 6-percent mark to the third quarter amid rising demand, which followed more favorable consumer and business sentiments.

However, Guinigundo said inflation may now next to be slower than earlier anticipated as the impact of the monetary measures recently implemented by the BSP has started to kick in.

He also cited the strengthening of the local currency and the decline in international oil prices, which largely affect domestic prices. The country imports the bulk of its oil requirements.

The appreciation of the peso, which keeps in the 41-to-a-dollar territory—makes imported goods cheaper, thereby pulling down domestic inflation.

For the entire year, the BSP now expects inflation to average at 4.7 percent, slower than the earlier forecast of 5.1 percent.

The central bank also reduced its inflation projection for 2011 from 5.7 to 5.6 percent.

Some of the measures made by the BSP earlier this year to curb inflation include the two reductions in the budget for rediscounting—first from P60 billion to P40 billion, and further to P20 billion.

Under the rediscounting facility of the central bank, banks may borrow an amount equivalent to the discounted value of their receivables, which will serve as collateral.

The BSP likewise raised the interest rate charged for discount loans to equal the overnight borrowing rate, which current is stuck at 4 percent. Previously, discount loans are charged an interest equivalent to 50 basis points below the overnight borrowing rate (the rate paid by the BSP for overnight deposits by banks).

These measures are expected to keep the average growth of money supply this year to between 18 and 22 percent, which the central bank considers to be moderate.

As of end-March, money supply, or M3, was up 18.3 percent from a year ago.

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BUSINESS Monday Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

This man's life

PR icon recalls celebrated career

By Ramona J. Papadilla
Contributor

A T 8, tribune celebrating a notable career in the field of public relations, Max Edralin, 79, was called to make his response.

Max stood up from his chair on the stage and walked straight out of the Manila Peninsula ballroom, planning it to one.

Max was in grief. He could not talk without choking. A month ago, he lost his wife, Ms. Jo Imson Lamson. Those days have his grandchildren, Alexis, died of leukemia. As the man's room, he faced a wall in silence until his two grandchildren pulled him back to the party.

It dilutes is on occasion for society to derive lessons from one man's storied life. What Max has is not much life. As a 13-year-old high school graduate from Sarrat, Ilocos Norte, whose enlisted mother could not afford to send him to college in the Big City. Max, then known as Nonoy, set out to overcome poverty. It may be a timeworn tale, but a key feature in Max's life was that he refused to use his surnames as capital.

That would have been too easy.

Target of lobbyists

The Bikolnon Manalilaw made Max a target of lobbyists. In the days of Martial Law, Max ignored his creative talents, Ferdinand E. Marcos, at the annual Gridirons of the National Press Club. He was untouchable. The cousins sounded alike and sported similar hairstyle suits that heavily piled high on top of their heads and swept back on the sides—the Marcos bouffant. Yet Max would not take advantage of his position.

"First, I didn't know the numbers of influence peddling," he said. "Second, I didn't have the stomach for it." (Actually, he did peddle his influence once, when he asked the military to release Jesus jail an executive of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, Baldomero Olivera.)

Max, former president of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines, created and promoted corporate image and reputation through strategic stakeholder relations and corporate social responsibility projects. When he was with Sen. Miguel Cuisip in the 1980s, he helped PR guru Joe Cuepo and Oscar Villadolid organize the Philippine Business for Social Progress.

In his response that night, Max said that "if my experience has any meaning or impact, it is that there is no substitute for self-reliance and hard work. If you want to combine talents and respectability, my advice is simple: keep your nose down."

Where it started

The hard work started at the Philippine Herald. He owned Modesto Farolan, then the newspaper's editor-in-chief, and later ambassador, his first job. Farolan made a brilliant farmer.

Farolan's son, Ramon (an inquirer columnist and retired Air Force general who also became an ambassador), recalled that Max learned how to type and, during his free time, looked over the shoulders of reporters in the newsroom. He was promoted from messenger-janitor to proofreader after editors found he could write, at 21, he became a reporter but had to quit school. He wanted to be a lawyer but couldn't manage night school without sacrificing his day job—he was covering the Department of Defense, and would list as gooses in Malacañang.

He spent two years as a reporter. His contemporary believes were Mia Soliven, Sonny Belmonte, Nincy Aquino, Raul Locsin, Oscar Villadolid and Teddy Benigno.

Having been a beneficiary of a townmate's kindness, Max carried on the tradition of helping other Ilocanos.

As a reporter, he had his share of flunkies. A controversy turned him and other newspapermen into headline news. A judge entered him and four other reporters—not Aquino, Enzo Soriano (acronym), Manuel Salak, Francisco de Leon, Gregorio Caresal—to be put behind bars. Fighting for freedom of the press, they refused to name the source of a story. A few hours later, the Supreme Court ruled on their petition for bail and let them out.

In jail

As the tribune, Max said the youngest of the journalists put here known about this 1955 incident had not the slightest interest in the record cold and recited the story. Max said: "Time everybody knows I went to jail."

From newspapering, Max jumped to PR work because he was raising a family. His uncle, Trade and Commerce Secretary Cornelio Balmaceda, employed Max as special assistant for public information.

He later became press information officer of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and worked in San Miguel for four years. He transferred to Ortigas as public affairs director, becoming a vice president before retiring. Many of his colleagues were graduates of Harvard, Wharton, and Yale. Whenever they needed advice on the impact of corporate policies on the public, they turned to Max—a college dropout.

With his counsel, Ortigas included microfinance in its financial service packages and turned a cemetery as the morning ground for many banking executives for the Philippines.

Managing CSR projects, Max accepted sponsorships by Philippine companies for Operation Smile. They gave not for the privacy up, but for their belief in the cause of helping children live out normal lives. In the tribute for Max, one girl, one of 23,000 success stories of Operation Smile, sang "I Have A Dream" from Les Miserables. She is flying to California next month to grant us is that to Hongkong concert.

Boy Scouts

When he was president of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines, Max also encouraged businesses to support boy scout projects. Frankie Bautista, a former BSP president and a PR pioneer, was confident that Max would have more years than he to help scouts even as a member emeritus. Max reminded him though that they are both 79. Retirement is not the audience and said: "To that extent, three years more."

Max reminds with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco, Jr., said the bank has been benefiting from Max's experience and insights in social campaigns and public affairs. He was recruited 10 years ago by then Governor Rafael Buenaventura. Tetangco is confident he can handily fix BSP Dreamers until Max is exempt from the mandatory retirement age.

He entrusted elders at the BSP Max, Ben Diokno and Teodoro Ahumada Jr. the monetary board enjoyed corn perks. Gaston at BSP's cocktail parties knew that the tiles were intended because chairs were brought in if they wanted to eat it.

Leukemia hit Alexis, a soprano, in late 2007. She was undergoing chemotherapy when Max and Jo celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in January 2008. That was a private celebration. Max, Jo and Alexis locked in a tearful embrace. Alexis, though battling from the effects of chemotherapy, showed up to church and sang "You Raised Me Up". She went in remission for a year but had a relapse in June 2009.

Alexis was remembered in the tribute by prominent members of the music community—George Yang, Tony Peneza, Rachelle Ermolina, Mary Ann and Nonoy Espina and Jonathan Co. When Rachelle sang, Max's breathing became shallow. He just quivered. He cupped his eyes and let go his tears: "She sounds exactly like my young soprano."

Before ending the night, he asked the PR communities to "let down projects." First, the PR associations, in a statement, should agree on a common code of ethics and the means to ensure it. Second, the associations should stop giving awards to companies whose products or services taint the community. These companies, he said, were corrupt to public relations because their ads had been banned. Third, they should nurture a partnership between government and the private sector to improve the image of the country.

As the night went on, Max thought the tribute was slipping into a two-day local session. But he thought it would be better for him to listen to what his friends had to say about him now while he was still around.

"Looking back, and listening to the speakers," Max said, "I think I must have had an interesting life."

(The tribute was organized by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines, and the Philippine chapter of the International Public Relations Association and the International Association of Business Communicators.)

EDRALIN poses in front of the sculpted profile of infamous cousin. Photo at right shows the PR man with his wife, Jo.

Something for the new president to consider

(The following is a portion of a speech delivered by the author during a meeting of Management Association of the Philippines in Cebu last April 30)

WE HAVE MUCH TO BE thankful for, as Filipinos, but many of us have not opened our eyes to the many blessings we enjoy. Truth to tell, we also have many reasons for feeling that we suffer from the curse of being stuck with one of the slowest economic growth rates in our part of the world, and with one of the highest levels of corruption in the perception of both domestic and foreign observers.

Many of us, including our major candidates for the highest office of the land, talk about good governance (GG). But have we taken the time to define what it demands, what it entails, and what we need to do to bring about the results GG should deliver?

Good governance entails that we unite ourselves and our efforts around values, rather than around persons.

If we want governance to move us forward, we should not just talk about it. We must work to make it perform and deliver results.

The first governance recommendation is for the next President to unite our people around common values that we all should hold dear. The focus should be on those ideals and principled convictions that are not open to place in the very core of everything we do as a people, whether in governments or outside of government. Those core values should include the following: love of God, respect for the dignity of every Filipino, GG and responsible citizenship, commitment to excellence, excellence, discipline and integrity, responsible stewardship in the preservation and enrichment of our environment and culture.

Last we forget, the next President should also constantly remind us of our mission as a people, which is nothing less than to "promote the common good, conserve and develop our patrimony, and secure for ourselves and posterity the blessings of independence and democracy under the rule of law and a regime of truth, justice, love, equality and peace".

The second governance recommendation is for the next President to take the lead in identifying the initiatives we should take, the measures of progress we should agree on, and the targets we as a nation should commit ourselves to achieving between 2010 and 2015.

The next President must challenge all of us to begin crafting and working consensus on what we must do, and of targets we must meet in advancing our community interests and our country's progress. From 2010 to 2015, each one of us should come down from the fence and enter into the arena where we personally are involved in the fight against the evils of poverty, ignorance, lack of opportunity, discouragement and despair.

The fourth governance recommendation is for the President to empower, engage, involve, and hold responsible every segment and level of the government, business, and civil society in making a positive contribution to the targets to our governance scorecard.

For the government, with the Office of the President serving as the main coordinator, governments agencies must be made to align their own governance scorecards with those for the nation as a whole.

Alignment means pushing responsibility towards the same strategic priorities by tapping into the unique possibilities for making positive contributions from every level of government.

The same holds true for business. The next President should make the playing field of business more level, more open, more competitive, and supported by enabling policies and more efficient infrastructure.

Civil society, too, needs to pull together, not only among its millions of components but also with the strategic priorities of the nation.

The final recommendation for the President is for him to view his task as the chief governance officer of our Republic, and this task comes with it the ultimate responsibility for unifying the nation and aligning the initiatives, plans and programs of every Filipino down to the last individual with the demands and targets of the national governance scorecard.

In weighing those recommendations, he should always bear in mind that he can never be equal in the rank of the President, as if he governs alone. Governance is about participation and the involvement of well-many citizens. It is as much for the governed as for the governor, as much for the ordinary people as for public officials.

President Cory Aquino served us well by being our "democracy President". Ramos did a creditable job as "peace President". Estrada and Arroyo in their time served a good purpose by reminding us of how badly we need a "governance President".

Thus, the next President should seek to become the "governance President" that our country has been waiting for all these past 12 years. He steps into a vacuum of GG, and this he must seek to fill.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is MAP Management Man of the Year 2009 and Chair of the Institute of Corporate Directors and the Institute for Solidarity in Asia. Feedback at: mapi@edfinet.com.ph, jpestanislao@yahoo.com.ph, or <map.org.ph>.)

Consumer loans rose 8% to P413B in first quarter

Credit to housing sector accounted for 40.3%

By Michelle V. Rafino

CONSUMER LOANS EXTENDED by universal, commercial and thrift banks grew in the first quarter from a year ago, which the Bankers Summit ng Pilipinas said would help sustain the economy's recovery throughout the year.

Statements from the BSP showed that outstanding loans for consumers—including auto, housing and credit card—amounted to P413 billion as of end-March, up 8 percent from P386 billion as of the same period last year.

Bank regulators said the increase in consumer loans was consistent with the improving confidence of banks to lend amid projections of an economic recovery this year from last year's slowdown. They said consumers were also more confident to take out loans as the expected recovery was seen to sustain, if not improve, their income levels.

The move of banks to extend more loans to individual borrowers, however, led to an increase in their exposure to bad debts. The ratio of non-performing consumer loans to the total amounted to 9.4 percent as of end-March, up from 9 percent.

The BSP also reported that non-performing consumer loans accounted for 20.9 percent of the banks' overall comprehensive loans, up from 20.2 percent in the same period last year.

Loan defaults by individual borrowers are normally less in amount than by corporate borrowers, which tap bigger loans from banks.

By type of consumer loans, the biggest amount extended by banks was in real estate, particularly residential properties. These loans accounted for 40.3 percent or P166.3 billion of total consumer loans extended by banks.

Credit card loans were the second-biggest form of consumer loans at P139.2 billion, accounting for 36.4 percent of the total.

Auto loans amounted to P99.6 billion, or 6.24 percent share, while other types of consumer loans (which include personal loans and educational loans, among others) accounted for P39.2 billion or 9.4 percent of total consumer loans.

The BSP said the increase in consumer loans helped prop up consumption, which was one of the key drivers of the robust growth of the economy in the first three months.

Economic managers said the Philippines was poised to grow much faster this year than last year's 1.1 percent.

The government has set an economic growth target of between 3.4 and 4.4 percent this year, but officials are considering to raise it to 5.0 following the robust expansion in the first quarter.

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EDC seeks $325M in loans

By Arlie O. Rarino

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORP., THE country's biggest producer of geothermal energy, is seeking $325 million in loans from foreign banks and a multilateral institution to help finance ongoing obligations and other capital expenditure projects.

Reliable sources said that about $175 million of the loans would come from three foreign banks—Credit Agricole, Standard Chartered Plc and Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd.

Proceeds will be used basically for the refinancing of the Mitsubishi U [yen loan]. We need to settle 20 billion yen, equivalent to about P12 billion," the source said.

The sources added that part of the amount would also be used for the company's expansion and greenfield power projects and justify finance the acquisition of the 150-megawatt (MW) Bacon-Manito (BacMan) geothermal power plants.

EDC, through its wholly owned subsidiary Bac-Man Geothermal Inc., submitted last month the highest bid of $10.25 million for the Bacon-Manito geothermal power plants package. It has yet to be turned over to the Lopez-led firm.

According to the source, EDC was just awaiting the approval of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas before it could tap the loan facility.

Meanwhile, the remaining $350 million will come from International Finance Corp. and other bilateral sources, according to documents from the World Bank unit.

IFC documents showed that the company, which is an existing IFC client in good standing, was seeking a direct IFC investment of up to $75 million and a potential mobilization of another $75 million from bilateral sources.

Proceeds from the loans would be used to partially finance the company's medium-term capital expenditure plan, IFC added.

"EDC is the largest company currently utilizing geothermal sources of energy in the Philippines, thus our support will provide critical additional resources of an appropriate tenor to help develop projects in the geothermal energy sector and thereby help the country move toward greater reliance on private sources of growth in the renewable infrastructure sector," the documents said.

Mindanao power supply seen ...

From page B1

amounts back.

Since the beginning of the year, the Mindanao grid, along with those in Luzon and the Visayas, had been experiencing power supply shortages, which resulted in brownouts lasting about two hours to as long as 12 hours daily.

The shortages were due to the curtailment/breakdowns of facilities, simultaneous maintenance work on power plants that necessitated shutdowns, and the El Niño dry spell, which drastically cut the generating capacities of hydroelectric power plants.

Mindanao, which sources about half of its electricity requirements from hydro resources, was hit hard by the prolonged drought and had to rely heavily on diesel-fed plants to supply additional power.

These fuel facilities included Southern Philippines Power Corp.'s 55 MW Barker-C Panel power station in Tumaguad and Western Mindanao Power Corp.'s 300-MW diesel-fired power plant in Zamboanga City.

Editor: Thelma Sioson San Juan Arts and Books Editor: Lito B. Zulueta

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

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New records set for Filipino art at Christie's auction

Totally unexpected were the prices realized for works by contemporary painter Geraldine Javier and National Artist Fernando Amorsolo

Ramon N. Villegas
Contributor

THE CHRISTIE'S auction of Southeast Asian Modern and Contemporary Art in Hong Kong last May 30 yielded both expected and unexpected results.

Benny Hsieh-Ling, head of Christie's Southeast Asian Art Department, said in a post-sale release that "the spring sale demonstrates clear strength and depth in the Southeast Asian contemporary art market."

Before the bidding, however, while confident that the Philippine pieces would sell, she was quite somewhat naive about the prices they would realize, given the political and economic situation of the country. She was more upbeat about the Indonesian and two Philippine works realized top prices.

The auction's top seller (HK$7,362,000 or P80M) was "Young Baliness Girl with a Hibiscus," by Romualdo Locatelli. He was born in Italy in 1903, and in 1943, he disappeared in the Philippines, where he is presumed to have died. (A superb, larger work by Locatelli is in the UST Museum collection.)

Totally unexpected were the prices realized for works by contemporary painter Geraldine Javier and National Artist Fernando Amorsolo.

"ELLA Ano' Apoinondiento y Fue Corresponsiba (For She Loved Fiercely, and She Is Well-Loved)," by Geraldine Javier

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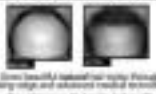

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New records set for Filipino art at Christie's auction

From page C1

temporary painter Geraldine Javier and National artist Fernando Amorsolo.

Javier, born in 1970, originally studied to be a nurse but shifted to art. At the age of 40, she has some two-full dozen, as her latest painting—arguably her best so far—proves.

Sacred elements

"Ella Amo/ Apasionadamente y Por Correspondida (for She Loved Fiercely and Her it Well Loved)" is a 91 x 61-in portrait of the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) painted in oil on canvas, with traces of framed embroidery and preserved butterflies.

Kahlo, born to a German father and Mexican mother, painted "pain and passion," using symbolism, surreal, folk art elements. Her (like Javier) originally studied medicine, but shifted to art. She led a difficult life marked by illness and injury requiring many surgeries and numerous marriages to the muralist Diego Rivera.

M. Ingimarsson, in his catalogue notes for the auctioned painting, wrote eloquent: "It is this transcendence from suffering to grace that lends Javier's work a sacred, almost religious sense... for it is this same inclusive soul that unites and comforts both the Javier protagonist who is reaching skillfully, finally Frida at the center of an explosion of gigantic flowers, like a Madonna engulfed in gold flares... In her to self-portraits, Kahlo always painted herself gazing directly at the viewer with unflinching eyes... Her locked directly at the viewer to show that suffering and to show she was not defeated by it, by showing the pain with her eyes looking away from the viewer, Javier offers a resolution to the nature of pain. Beyond the dark shells of nature, there can be beauty and peace—like the quiet ground after an earthquake, like the stillness at the heart of a exploded star."

Javier's work realized a new auction record for the artist, finishing nearly 18 times more than the original low estimate. The Filipino is the auction, about two years in a wasteful of Indonesian, found it difficult not to break into applause after the spirited bidding.

He remained and as he unidentified "Asian institution" is said to later purchased the piece.

Javier, Arnold Alcantara and Jose Santos III are among the New Painters, a group of artists mostly born in the 1970s, who came into their maturity at the turn of the century.

Despite the high prices realized by Javier's works in recent auctions, Ingimarsson retains the record among the New Painters for highest hammered bid so far, for a huge work sold a couple of years ago.

In the Spring 2010 auction, a bajoe walked away with Amorsolo "Overcome" (84 x 60-in) for a more-entire price.

"Overcome" is mostly black and white, except for the stream of colorful images of commodities...representing material sins—that today comprises transparencies and consumerism. The painting is a reference to traditional garb and wedding a classical mental instrument, to the new one, naked and self-exposed.

"NICU Planting," by Fernando Cueto Amorsolo

Decent amount

"The Closet" (72 x 48-in) is a work by another New Painter, Jose Santos III, which fetched a decent amount. The work is a portrait of a self that remains diffident, largely imaginary, living out ad hoc life.

The younger local work despite the lack of a standard criteria, across which is among a value from which it would have been losing, it still to be made into something piece of pillow cloth is along on the sales on one side. Almost the whole under century is taken up by an apparently Avoid, weathered piece of thin wood with peeling paint, over which a weathered frame is held by duct or packing tape.

Ingimarsson of along skewed dust, paints and a shoe are arranged as if someone on certain were trying to decide if they fit to... perhaps. The ghostly partygoers are topped by a line of entangled plastic straw cloth where the master's brain would have been. That such insouciant everyday things could demand such deep thought speaks of a master.

All works by other Filipino artists were sold, including those by Luz Llan Ibre, Wire Bautista, Jobo Herrera, Isidol Figuera and Tasmen Baens.

Amorsolo pieces

Also unexpected was the hammer price of Lot 1306, "Lavanderas (Washerwomen)" (20 x 32 ½ in) by Filipino National Artist Fernando Amorsolo, dated 1923. It fetched the second highest price in the sale.

The work seemed little attention to Manila's art circle before the sale, although it is a work done when the artist was in his prime (1920-1940s). Through-out his life, Amorsolo struggled to earn a light, attempting to capture every nuance of shade and shadow.

In "Lavanderas," the day is just beginning to break on the horizon, a still cold blues of yellow and orange outlining the trees. In the "dull light" of the foreground, two mestizo figures are already busily washing laundry by a stream.

In bring it home, a private collector paid US$433,000 (about P20.2M), around 11 times its original low estimate. (All auction sales figures include premium). It surpassed the artist's previous record of less than P500K a few years ago for the vastly superior "Portrait of Inocencia de Jesus" dated 1930 (32 x 20 in).

The hammered price of another Amorsolo also raised eyebrows. Lot 1202, a "Rice Planting" scene (24 ½ x 36-in) dated 1951, fetched US$132,500 (approximately P6.6M), about four times its original low estimate.

The work has brilliant, joyous colors and a dynamic composition. Most Filipino collectors, however, would have preferred to pay less for this particular painting, because of its date. By convention, 1950 is considered the beginning of Amorsolo's decline, when his work became more commercialized, when his eyesight had begun to deteriorate and he is said to have begun relying more and more on assistants.

Lot 1201, a common Amorsolo scene usually referred to as Manila as "Under the Mango Tree" (dated 1949, 24 x 36 ½ in), fetched a more logical US$67,839 (approximately P3.15M), perfectly within the prevailing parameters and indeed on the low side.

Top Southeast Asian artist

Overall, Ingimarsson Marshall remained his place as the top Southeast Asian contemporary artist, with all four works of the Indonesian artist in the sale's top, ten, and purchased by dealers...thus is, meant to be sold.

Building was also competitive on key modern works, resulting in two new auction records and strong prices on Indonesian, Filipino and Vietnamese works in general.

In the end, 13 lots recorded over P600 each, "pointing to a clear appreciation of modern masterworks alongside irrigation of building for quality contemporary lots from a broad Asian demographic," according to Bonay.

"Compared to the sale held a year ago, this sale marks a 11% percent improvement and a full recovery of the Southeast Asian modern and contemporary art market."

The May auction augurs well for the Autumn 2010 sale.

Visual Arts

"LOLA," by Jose Santos III

Jose Benitez to exhibit in Berlin

Under the auspices of the Philippine Embassy in Germany, the works of Filipino artist Jose de Arts Benitez will be exhibited at the Berlin Institute for Cultural Diplomacy starting June 10. As a feature of the observances of Philippine National Day at the German capital.

The exhibition was arranged by Ambassador to Germany Delia Albert with consul Gloremie Mangunay as coordinator.

Some 20 works of the artist whose works have been exhibited in Manila and the Walter Whitehurst Gallery in Soho and the Philippine Consulate in New York will be shown at the Berlin exhibit. The Berlin show will be Benitez's first European exhibition.

Included will be large murals and abstract works that art critic and fellow artist Gil Reyes described as reaching "all the expressive possibilities of which each segment of form or surface of color can convey." Benitez has a BA in Visual Arts, magna cum laude, from Brown University. This will be her 15th solo exhibit. The first held was at the Ayala Museum, Makati City, in 1968.

"SHIGAKI I Sakura," by Dominican Alfonso

"CELESTIAL Skyline," by Robert Chamberlain

Simultaneous solo shows

Writers Mark Javier Balbastar, Isabelle Lacerga and Ruben Klondelariño are art teacher Bernadette Chow, who all have their solo Bagoes City are featured in "Showright and Works," simultaneous solo exhibitions by each the formal opening on June 12 at the new, expanded Kiss the Cook Gourmet, a restaurant, deli and gallery at its Magsaysay st., LSP Village, Session City. The show runs until July 8.

"THERE," by Jose Santos III

Vicente at Magnet

Maria Vicente's works are on view in "Crusty," until June 30 in Mag-net Gallery in Rockwell. Her new show, "Crusty," which, Jason Buan the specialize of images on the wall, directly points to the audience still being able to go on and continue with the way things were after visually engaging themselves with the images.

Photos, prints, etc. at Kaida

Kaida Gallery (36 Scout Tuazon st., Barangay Sacred Heart, Quezon City tel. 0928-302-0109), a small exhibition gallery, now presents "Manila from the Sky," photographs by Pierre-Emmanuel Michel, on its Grey Wall until June 20. Simultaneously on Kaida Gallery's White Wall, nine young contemporary female artists display the Filipino passion for mostly commemorative representation: "The Tall Ass Show" presents prints by Mica de Guzman, Veronica Peralejo; sculptures by Chelsea Macaso, Kaleria Sy and Charisma Lee; and paintings by Jenna Dolera, Aya Ng, Nikki Valenzuela and Paola Serrano.

Group show at Galeria de las Islas

"A Big Enough Umbrella" opens on June 15 featuring artists Kathrina Bon Lao, Stefano Alonso Valenzuela, Sherwin Cuñeo, Richard Dunford, Ana Prieto, Ana Jan Galerie and Vincent Lanuza. This on view until July 10 in Galeria de las Islas (2/F, Solaris Center, 114 Gen. Luna St. Intramuros, Manila, tel. 527-2113).

"DESHOJA," by Ginny Alfonso

Till artists in tribute to Makati

Crispa Regoso showcases works of 30 artists in the exhibit "Ang Sining ka Makati," at 1 IE Art Pavilion in the Art Center (2/F Bonifacio Stock st., Bonifacio Makati) tel. 895-1757) in conjunction with Makati Day. Six galleries: Artwork Gallery, Galerie Anne, Gallery Big, Blanc Room Galleries, Ilac Workshop and Artas Artspace, all located at LPU, will feature works of well-known master's like Vicente Cabrera, Jr. Ang Kiukok, Federico Aguilar Alcantara, Manuel Baldemor, Romeo Tabuena, Ronald Ventura, Jay Jumalon, JPI Dias and Michael Zacarias. It runs until June 30.

Blanc Room Gallery's "Play Fiscally" is ongoing in the Inner Room of Serrig Gallery. The show features the works of Yhoo Bills Bautista from the University of the Philippines. Rose Mesquena, Francis Commigues, Raphael David, Paolo Gomez, Kris Oliveros, Lucas Taboada and Lois Velasco. The theme revolves around the idea of crafting art through play.

"STUCK in Rewrite," by Alexis Augcon

Angeles at Mendez

Alexis Angeles' paintings are on view in the exhibit "Panaginip" in Mendez Big & Small Gallery (4/L, Bldg. A, 388 Mezzanine) Edsa, Mandaluyong) tel. 908-3680) until June 23. His works focus on daydreams, fantasies and nightmares.

Plans at SM Art Center

Passion Gallery recently opened "Illuminate," an exhibit by Bicol artist Pancho Piano (third from left) at SM Art Center (3/M Megamall, Mandaluyong). Subjects include Our Lady of Peñafrancia, Mayon Volcano and Iraya or Bicol's legendary tall mountain goddess. Opening the exhibit are Fr. Manny Rutledo, parish priest of the Lady of Annunciation Church, who unveils plays Piano's stained glass windows; Sr. Ruby Puebelo; soprano Josephine Somes; Nina Cadayona; art collector Mars Morales; and Passion Gallery manager Tina Infante. Exhibit ends on June 10.

Sangnisje group at the Crucible

The Crucible Gallery (4/F, Bldg. A, 388 Mezzanine) Mandaluyong; tel. 636-4063) presents "Inuman", on June 8, a group exhibition by Sangnisje artisan members are artists John-Paul Abitol, Junah Abitol, Jayjay Asuncion, Gumersindo Bandolon, Edrick Bastes and Dennis Ferraco. Sangnisje explores how the idea of hope is exploited to further forces such as politics, religion and social class.

All set for a bigger, better ManilArt '10

AFTER THE SUCCESS OF LAST YEAR'S ManilArt, the Association Art Galleries Organization (Dingol basin up once more with the National Commission for Culture and Arts (NCCA) and the Department of Tourism to showcase the finest of Philippine visual arts "in the biggest and freest ManilArt 'Yet, the second Philippine International Art fair.

Slated on July 30-Aug. 1 at the SMX Convention Center at the Mall of Asia Complex, ManilArt '10 will look all with an exclusive by-invitation only preview on July 29.

The fair promises to dazzle art lovers and enthusiasts with the best and broadest examples of Philippine contemporary art. Over 3,000 paintings and sculptures by 400 of the country's brightest talents will be on display and over 60 of the finest art galleries will participate, thus making the fair the biggest ever in Philippine history.

"In the first year of ManilArt, it took us three long months to fill up the 40 exhibition booths planned," said Dingol president Jonathan Sy. "This year, with the booths more snapped up within two days by some of the most prestigious galleries nationwide. We posted a 60-percent increase in participation, with half of that number getting double-sized booths."

Sy and Dingo would like to thank SMX for agreeing to host ManilArt 4 at a subsidized rate as a form of support for Filipino art and artists.

Exciting activities such as painting demonstrations, on-the-spot competitions, free-to-browse and many more are lined up, and it's why she thanked the NCCA Commission on Art Education headed by Lyn Ines for giving a helping hand for ManilArt '10.

This at The Pen

Kaida Terrace and solo show, "Break in Continuity," runs until June 30 at Pinto Art Museum (Sitio Nangka, Brgy. Antipolo, Rizal). Pinto Art Museum is open from Tuesday to Sunday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call 02-696-7413 for more information.

Restoring and conserving the historic Santa Ana Church

From page C2

black, white and red stripes, borders of blue-black pointed foliage framed windows.

The retablo was originally painted in four yellow and pink marble, its columns to set with gilded capitals and bases. The pedestrian had once been decorated with ramps of foliage in red, yellow and gold leaf, and the sections by the retablo were painted to simulate Carrara marble.

Original finish

Modern finishes were stripped away to get to the raw adobe blocks of the chamber and to closely build back the original finish, layer by layer. Mia Petracco, lighting expert, designed and installed a lighting scheme of "grazer" lights that emit minimum heat and use the least amount of energy.

A 1998 painting at the baptistry vestibule was taken down to allow restoration of the vestibule's original finish, revealing an elaborately older painting underneath, a painting on wood also of the Baptism of Christ, possibly of the same period as the Cenáculo murals.

A double layer of balconies and 18 paintings of Christ, the apostles and Evangelists encircle the extraordinary church dome. Lit by small windows, the barely visible paintings are now lit with state-of-the-art, low-energy lighting. Cool emits minimum heat to prevent damage to the paintings.

Painted and overpainted through the years, the main altar's original finish required major work for it to be uncovered. Work began on the frame of the central niche holding the Virgin's image.

With about 2 cm of paint, putty, automotive paint and other mixed-in materials now removed, the earliest remaining finish has been discovered. It turned out to consist of coral gold leaf, blue for the background and yellow for highlights that have now been restored with 22-karat gold leaf.

The gaudy restored baptistry and the new dome and retablo major lights were officially turned over by the Custodia de la Inmaculada Concepción to the Order of the Franciscan Missionaries (OFM) in a solemn ceremony held on Dec. 2, 2009.

The Franciscans Order agreed to safeguard and protect Dominic damage the documented objects, structures and features destroyed, to observe accepted standards of built heritage conservation, and to desist from intervention, embellishment and other work that would degrade or distract from the conserved appearances.

The convent is a unique surviving example in Metro Manila of a structure that has elements of 17th and 18th century Mexican architectural and building techniques, painted out Mexican art and architecture historian Jorge Luyapaya. It is worthy of being restored and turned in a museum for Manila Mia, and also as a heritage activity center.

Far from complete

Much work has been done, but the restoration is far from complete. The most critical, difficult and expensive need for the conservation of the exterior walls of the church and convent – built of soft adobe stone, they were originally covered with coral-colored polecats of sand, lime and binder that was removed in the 1970s, leaving the soft stone exposed to the elements and to pollution. Parts are now flaking off.

Careful engineering, chemical analysis and conservation work are needed to prevent further damage and to recover the old beauty of the facades.

Working together, Cebuhis Inmaculada and Lebuhin Dominicanskin successfully obtained a grant from the NCCA for the restoration of the lime-based and colored paintings beginning with the main (front) façade. Work is expected to begin shortly.

"It is gratifying," concludes Lupa, "that so much has been accomplished in less than two years. This has been due to the cooperation and understanding that has developed among the Order of Franciscan Missionaries, the parish priests, parish and lay organizations and parishioners of Sta. Ana; non-governmental entities agencies, particularly the NCCA and the National Museum; the Lebuhin de la Inmaculada Concepción, Filipino Heritage Festival, Inc. and other private donors; and private experts and professionals in tangible heritage conservation and restoration.

These accomplishments show that much is possible with goodwill, cooperation, focus, technical expertise and hard work."

E-mail the author at pride.phcc@gmail.com

Restoring and conserving the historic Santa Ana Church

The present restoration work is removing the layers of modern finishes

THE 1725 SHRINE OF NUESTRA Señora de los Desamparados (Our Lady of the Abandoned) at Sta. Ana, its Camarín de la Virgen and the archaeological excavation in the church patio, declared a National Cultural Treasure, is undergoing thorough conservation work.

Anna Lara reports on the restoration and conservation work accomplished through the combined efforts of the Franciscan Order, the Parish Pastoral Council, the Cofradía de la Sorra, Sta. de los Desamparados (Cofradía Desamparados), and the Cofradía de la Inmaculada Concepción (Cofradía Inmaculada).

A series of renovations has marred the structure. In the 1970s, the protective polyvinyls (latex-based stucco coating) on its exterior and interior walls were completely chipped off, replaced with a cement mixture mixed to imitate stone blocks.

New side aisles and resin "stained-glass" windows were added, a tile roof installed, the campanario (bell tower) reshaped.

Also, beige marble replaced colonial azulejo tiles in the sanctuary, and ordinary ceramic tiles replaced almost half of the Mitad Dynasty porcelain tile of the Camarín.

Somewhere above, the pulpit, bell, historic artifacts and other features were removed, some ironically sold to finance the modernization that included refinishing the main altar and baptistery with shiny automotive paint and synthetic gold leaf. Sadly, the western-style dome with modern waterfall and techniques were incompatible with the original materials from the colonial era.

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

Unique paintings

The present restoration work is removing the layers of modern finishes. A team of conservation professionals faithfully follows international standards to restore what was originally there.

Eleven unique paintings depicting the life of the Holy Family fill the entire ceiling of the Camarín de la Virgen. Since its 1970s restoration, wood battens, fan and bird droppings, missing artifical lighting, humidity and heat have damaged the surrounding ceiling.

The two Cofradías secured a grant from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) for the National Museum to help remove the Camarín murals, to be done by the same expert team who had worked on the conservation of Luna's "Spoliarium."

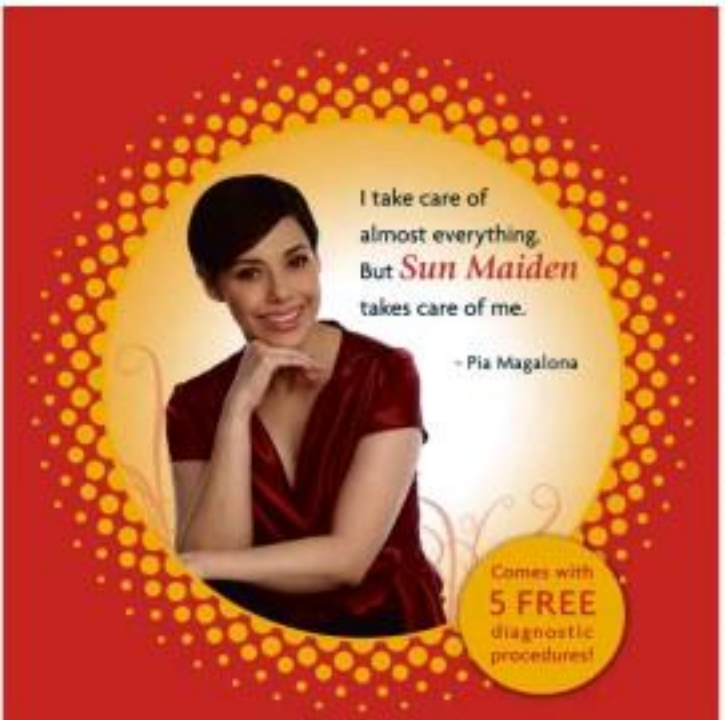
As conservation treatment progressed, the Cofradía Inmaculada agreed to fund and direct the restoration of the baptistery, at the base of the bell tower, to the right of the church's main door.

The baptistery had been remodeled over the years, and the encaustic modern paint was removed from the walls. Conservation analyst Cristina Storino brought samples of the original masonry to a New York laboratory where microscopic analysis revealed 10 layers of lime/dolomite/stone walls and mud.

Guided by the full results and assisted by students of Ferrais Valley, the Spanish government funded conservation team's school in Intramuros, work was undertaken by restoration architect Michael Manalo, masonry and color expert Cristobal Aguilar, and surface color expert Liliane Bejarin Mendoza.

Unsurprisingly, traces of what appeared to be the 1725 colors showed that the baptistery was painted like 17th- and 18th-century Mexican churches. The walls and vault were finely-yellow with fine architectural lines on the vaults. All four walls had a painted Venetian red dado bordered with

PULIT restored altar and walls of the Sta. Ana baptistery



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P24

Oliver Salonga evaluates lessons learned from international piano contests

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

OLIVER SALONGA IS NOW A HOLDER of a Master of Music in Piano Performance degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied under Ania Dorfmann-Babiš, a silver medalist in the 2001 Van Cliburn Competition.

"When I was still doing a degree program, my days were always fully booked with classes, with very little time to focus on my practicing," he said. "I refused anytime I could get knowing that those are just the only time I can practice for that day."

He's now taking a diploma course from the same institute.

"My schedule now is more flexible. I start my day going to the gym, practice three hours in the afternoon and three hours at night. There is definitely more time to refresh my

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Oliver Salonga evaluates lessons learned...

From page B1

mind and body," he said.

Eight years after twice winning the top prize of the National Music Competition for Young Artists, and seven years after graduating as a music scholar of the Philippine High School for the Arts, pianist Salonga has learned to face challenges as they arise.

Earlier, he won a concerto competition in Florida while studying at Lynn University as a full music scholar.

Two years ago, he won the gold medal in the 2008 Asanju International Piano Competition in Seoul, Korea, and last March, he emerged as one of the top 20 competitors in the 2010 Hilton Head International Piano Competition in South Carolina (from among 140 applicants).

WITH Cecile Licad

Appreciative jury

"I had lots of fun performing," he said about competing. "But what I learned more was commiserating with the audience. The members of the jury, for one, are very appreciative of all contestants. Some of them even approached me after my First and second rounds, and I was touched when they told me they were really moved by my performance.

"In my free time, my host family showed me interesting spots and hangout places on the island. It was awesome! I also had a chance to talk to the judges and I was touched when they have to say—Ginga Choi improved them and things that they thought could be better. Prior to the finals, all of the contestants were given a chance to have fun and bond. It was just so amazing to see that all of us had such strong personalities... and they showed us the way we express our music."

In the jury were formidable musicians such as John O'Conner (chair) from Ireland; Stella Wan, from the Juarmat School of Music; Robert McDonald, Juilliard; Chung Mo-Kang, Korean National University of Art; Bertand Cuthbo, Hanszeva Hoebarbie; Jane Cong, University of British Columbia; and Erik Tawaststjerna, Finland's Sibelius Conservatory.

Salonga has learned not to make a big deal about not emerging the top winner.

High competition level

"I learned that 'playing well' will always be a given in a high competition level. Talent will always be factored but the amount of preparation and refinement will always be the utmost priority. I can totally understand the jury...

"Some factors also come into the picture like the personality of the person, how strong his musical courage is, and the just-in-case-of-a-misfortune that goes with it, and the natural honesty and unique of tone colors, organization of the materials, or how they are put together and how they are clearly delineated. These are good points you learn in a competition which you will not get from piece-classroom exposure.

"That competition also gave me a reassurance of what I can offer and what others don't have. On the other hand, that competition is the best opportunity to learn from other pianists. I also used that experience to get better and perform to my best for performances."

Winners were veterans of other competitions: Lukas Vondracek, 20, Olivier Latry and Victor Santiesteban, who were prizewinners from the 2009 Top Chivas Competition; Ilya Shamirov, winner of the 2008 Maria Canals Competition in Spain; and Rana Sada and Elmar Gasimov, winners of the 2003 Queen Elizabeth International Piano Competition.

Before his advanced studies in Cleveland, Salonga had been discovered by Rosario B. Licad (mother of Cecile). He also learned under Marlena Cruz and Carmencita Aranda-Lim and (at) to Roberta Rust in Florida. While in New York, he was also coached by Cecile Li said.

Strive for perfection

"Professor Pompa-Baldi is a very accomplished concert pianist," he said about his Cleveland mentor. "He is very young, which means he adheres his ability to really articulates his thoughts. But he is a very great demonstrator in the sense that he guidance enables me to see what approach (we should take and what) tweak you should try to achieve.

"It was an advantage that he was fresh from the competition circuit. Aside from the silver medal in the 2001 Chopin, he won first prize in the Robert Casadesus and Marguerite Long International Piano Competitions. He now, he knows what it's like to be a contestant. As for me, I will always remember what he told me before I did Florida International a couple of years ago: he said, 'Stop blabbing about success... Stop worry too much. Just play well.'

"The most important thing is that I learned more from his methods as musician, which is to always push oneself, and not be afraid to take risks and to always strive for perfection."

This should serve him well when he plays Mozart, Ravel, Scriabin, Rachmaninoff and Prokofiev in his June 11 recital at Philamlife Theater.

"I have learned that Rachmaninoff doesn't serve the purpose of music and that best approach is to be always sincere and deliver music to the audience in a deeply personal level," Salonga added.

For tickets, call 7684152 or 5573811 or 0998-5194279.

ALL SET for another homecoming recital on June 11

French acrobatic art comes to Manila

RICCARDO Rinaudo and Flavia Lucciola

IN "SIPPIN SHE CORPS," two young men explore their relationship through the language of acrobatics. There is tenderness and violence, attraction, loneliness and fear. This powerful duet goes straight to the heart of the subject as it explores a web of complex emotions. The Company Un Loup Pour Diomme presents a form of circus dance that goes way beyond mere physical prowess.

The performance is based on a spectacular hand-to-hand acrobatic technique between a purist and another with aerialist. "Sippin par Corps" deals with human relationships, poetry, suspense, lines of attraction and repulsion. The manifestation of space and body contact is witnessed through this dazzling trip through art in action. The duet will astound you with their skills, producing remarkable street artistry.

The Company Un Loup pour Diomme is composed of Frenchmen Alexander Vau, and Quebec-born Frédéric Arsenault. The Company was a prize winner at the 2009 Jeunes Talents Cirque, France's most important showcase for Modern Circus performers. The company's name plays with an ancient Breton proverb, "man is a wolf to man," always proving an one another yet coupled and dependent on each other. Director Arnaud Anckaert is well known in France for his staging of plays by modern European writers including Daniil Kharms, Peter Handke and Paolo Bellelli.

During their stay in Manila, the Company Un Loup pour Diomme will give a workshop for NGO children on June 11, 9 a.m.–12 noon, at B. Italo Inn (7275 Mahogany St., San Antonio Village).

For ticket sales and reservations, contact Alliance Française de Manille at 893-7585/893-7441/893-7161; fax: 893-0851; or text 0917-8939988. E-mail address@alliancefr.ph or info@alliancefr.ph, or call HOK Plaza (887-6441) loc. 31.

Tickets are at P999, and P2,000 for students.

ZUET performance is based on a hand-to-hand acrobatic technique.

A FABULASAGOM Laura Fermari, Isabel Wilson, Silvana Ferrari, Baltasar Rodrigo, Doreen Yu and Patrick Jubelo

ARTURO Esperino, Soledad Arias, Ambassador Fermari, Nady Santana and Raul Bunoz

Dinner for Olivier

FOLLOWING HIS resounding four-encore debut as the new and youngest-ever (at 30 years of age) conductor and musical director and artistic director of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, French-born but United States-raised Olivier Ochanine was accorded a private dinner by Cultural Center of the Philippines trustee Nedy Tantoco.

Held at the Upper lobby of the Peninsula Manila...with a musical score on hand to provide a musical interlude over dinner—the guests included Italian Ambassador Luca Fermari and his wife Silvana, and CCP president Ambassador Isabel Wilson, who offered words of felicitation to Olivier before the six-course dinner commenced.

In his response, a somewhat troubled Olivier said he was overcome by the welcome he had received in the Philippines, both from media and outside of CCP. He added that he was here so much to learn from the experience of being the PPO musical director as he is to impart his musical knowledge.

ENJOYING themselves after dinner: LED businessman Patrick Juliers, Tessie Lee, Orhanine, Diana Jeanne Lopez and Silvana Dina

SILVANA Fermari, the Italian ambassador's wife

THE PROFESSIONALS behind the successful dinner (from right) with Diana Jeanne Lopez, Peninsula Manila's (pictured) director Stephanie Chang and general manager Jonathan Cronk

A TOAST is shared by Orhanine and Tantoco

TENOR Arturo Esperino and soprano Rachelle Garcellano

SHOWBIZ and jumbo

HISTORY jumbo and Isabel Wilson

UST Singers bag top prizes in European choral tilts

UST Singers.

By Antonio C. Nilo
Contributor

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS Singers, conducted by founding music director Fidel Calalang Jr. of the UST Conservatory of Music, won top prizes in international choral competitions in Europe recently.

The 29-member chorus visited choirs in on a four-month tour of Europe, its 17th since it was founded 18 years ago in 1992. It left Manila last April 9, after giving farewell performances that earned it ritual cores.

The chorus was declared the grand-prize winner at the 17th Stinger International (Iconic) Festival held in Mareh Ireland April 21-25 after it bagged three first prizes in the Mixed Choir, Madrigal and Sacred Category, the second prize in the Light Entertainment category, and the Special Distinction trophy given to the Best Visiting Choir.

The UST Singers hosted some 28 choirs from Wales, Scotland, England and Ireland. The Ringtor International Festival is dubbed "a jewel in the crown of choral singing in South Ireland."

At the 54th Gyk International Choral Festival, held May 1-4, the UST Singers bagged the Lady Dorothy Mayer Memorial Trophy for their outstanding performances of a 20th century piece. The choir also got the coveted Peace Trophy, an award given to the choir that had touched the "hearts of all who heard them."

The UST Singers were the only choral group in the competition that consistently garnered standing ovations in all performances in the entire duration of the contest.

At the 8th International Choir Festival Miasteo Canter in Sopot, Poland, held May 15-23, the UST Singers bagged the Grand Prix as the first Festival Gyak. The choral group won three first prizes—in the Sacred, Secular, and Spiritual/Gospel and Jazz categories. The choir won over groups from Finland, Poland, Singapore, Sweden, Slovakia, Norway and Ukraine.

FIDEL Calalang holds Peace Trophy.

Auditions, stage management workshop

TONY ESPEJO, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR of Gemmayale Theater, announces the forthcoming audition and stage management workshop, signaling the start of the company's 52nd season.

The audition is on June 14, 2-6 p.m., at the Rehearsal Hall, Open Air Auditorium, Intramuros, Manila.

It is open to aspiring and professional actors, male and female, aged 18 years old and above. Interested parties must bring two pictures, close-up and whole body, and a resumé.

The line-up of plays for this year are the four classics—"Pinocchio at Lasco," "Aurora," "Bong Adarna" and "El Filibusterismo"; a rarm hit of English plays, "The Stepchild" and "How Fisher in Tonic"; a new children's musical by J. Dennis "Bookish and Jones Lacio, "Beauty and the Beast", and the revival productions of "Bayan Bayanna," "Kwelan si Liksi ng Bimbolon," "Gen-eral Geno," "Madilim ang Gabi sa Liwi" and "Pito si Dating."

The stage management workshop, on the other hand, is set on June 21-July 3, 1-5 p.m., with Ed Maclle as main facilitator. Tuition is P3,000.

Call 5280403 or 888 0921-3288800 or 0925-5515142. Visit www.gemmayaleatrers.multiply.com and www.facebook.com/gemlapes.

Jose Rizal and Leonor Rivera—dinner theater-style

By Ariadne Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

DINNER THEATER IS BOOMING A comeback, and in a somewhat more elegant circle. Intramuros Restaurant in the Walled City of Intramuros, Manila.

The play to be presented—ostensibly an excerpt from National Artist Severino Montano's "The Love of Leonor Rivera"—is "Leonor," directed by theater icon Tony Cuzon-Rogers. Antaon Rey Reyner appears as José Rizal, and Paula David as his "lover cousin" and great love Leonor Rivera.

The production seems to be a story editor; it will be staged on June 11 and 18, with cocktails at 7:15 p.m., curtain time at 8 p.m., to be followed by dinner at 9. (Visit cuzonproductions.com for more information.)

In his landmark biography of Rizal, "The First Filipino" (1960 but with a new edition by Anvil Publishing), Leon Ma. Guerrero writes that Leonor's "photographs show a slender girl, almost thin, with a high forehead, great black eyes, and a small, pursed mouth, still, starchaced but candid."

They certainly seem to each other in ends.

Unwanted suitor

Rizal and Seborita Rivera were formally engaged but, as every Filipino student knows or should know, their love was not to be. Rizal was supposed to join Leonor and her family in their hometown of Linguisan, Pangasinan, but his career ambitions (the journey became parental objections on both sides) got in the way.

As the National Hero wrote in his since Soledad in 1889, "You know very well, all of you, know, that I should and could have gone to Pangasinan, that I was formally engaged... But their father Potenciano was oppressive to it, and I gave way. I obeyed."

Guerrero asks: "What happened? Simply that Leonor's parents had changed their minds about having a mestizo suitor for a son-in-law, and Don Francisco was not going to see his son play the part of an unwanted suitor."

The heartbroken Leonor later married an Englishman, Scott Kippens.

The biographer concludes that both Rizal and Leonor "were hopeless romantics who would inevitably as in fact they did, retreat to solace the tangible evidence of a love that would thenceforth have only in the unbreakable privacy of memory."

Summer workshop

The concept "Leonor" is a project of Cuzon-Rogers' The Philippine Drama Company Sala Theater and Silahis Arts & Artifacts of Intramuros.

Sala (living room) Theater began in 1982 in the home of Cuzon-Rogers, where she created a summer workshop for the youth and integrated this with training skills training for the graduate students of the Philippine Normal College (now university).

Since then, the actress-director has extended the concept to include venues like parks, barangay halls, basketball courts, churches and, now, dinner theater.

"The Love of Leonor Rivera" was presented more than 50 years ago.

"Today," says Cuzon-Rogers, "we shall attempt to rekindle a non-appreciation of José Rizal, especially among our youth, by focusing on the classic conflict between choice and fate, and between love and duty. (A second rehash this love story somewhat just a few years before the Philippine Revolution of 1896."

THE PHILIPPINE Drama Company Sala Theater presents "Leonor," directed by theater icon Tony Cuzon-Rogers

PAULA Dominican Leonor Rivera, the tragic heroine of Rizal's life

At 45, Macuja dances 'Giselle' consistently, powerfully

By Margot C. Enriquez
Contributor

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, WHEN Lisa Macuja established Ballet Manila and, subsequently its school, she sought to make Philippine classical dancing accessible to the masses. Now in her middle's, she's out to debunk the great myth that dancing is only for the young and svelte. Go, girl!

Dancers today have a longer shelf life due to more scientific training. And, as long as dancers carefully choose their roles and have choreographers that highlight their assets, ballet performances can not only set aside depth, but also create the magic of theater.

One of Macuja's signature dances is "Giselle," particularly in Act 2 where she plays the ghost of a betrayed virgin. She learned the choreography from Galina Kekisheva when she became the first foreigner to be invited to join the Kirov Ballet.

She credits her mentor Tatiana Udalenkova for the economy each as the third scene, thus making her dancing, especially in Act 2, an arresting sight.

Over the years that she has done "Giselle," Macuja has been consistent. When she performed the full-length version recently at a fundraiser for the scholarship program Project Ballet Pinoys, Macuja amazed. The audience with the strength of her technique and her detailed mime.

AMAZING! The audience with technique and detailed mime

Romantic style

In Act 1, she remained in character as the shy and naive peasant girl infatuated with dance and with the enigmatic Lutyo who (was Count Albrecht in disguise).

There were no signs of years and ease, she being 45 years old, in her dancing. The jumps projected into an arc and the movements pulled beyond steps, all of which were characteristic of the Romantic style.

The little beauty jumps while turning across the floor were clean. Her series of killer leaps on points and the choppy attack of her turns around the stage well-centred the audience.

When she did Dance Theater Philippines' production of "Giselle" in the late '80s, I found Macuja's mad scene too contrived. But in her recent performance, she toned her volitions and she knew that life had given her through mime.

Macuja's feet 2 wealth was predictably a walk in the many forms he has like still-naked to dig deep into her arabesque penchée (one leans forward and brings the back leg pointing toward the ceiling), in the silhouette benchmark of line, in fact, she made it more elongated. She exuded the stirring undercapes and arms and the tender contouring of the upper body.

Her partner Iñaki de Dios, who played Albrecht, was impressive with his elevation and effortlessness of male bearing, as the virtuosity with which his legs renounces in the air.

Ivy brilliance

Rest of all was his strong and calm partnering. Together, they flowed delicately in their pas de deux which had a whispery quality to it. The signature reversed lift happened with grace and speed but didn't look awesome. His partnering was so reliable that it prompted a ballerina to comment: "He knows how to show off Lisa."

As Myrtha, Queen of the Wilis, Taira Coates projected icy brilliance while keeping a heavy and lilt to her dancing. She performed with a soft, lyrical body complemented by the form as well.

Physical energy flowed down the long limbs of her physique. With her extensions, she was compelling as her legs sliced through space at the peak of her jumps.

The long-legged French Corsaire was fiercely dramatic as Ishtaroc, for some show-his highlight, Clois Clois Gouverov made a beautiful Bathsheba Batsheba.

Ballet Manila's version of the Petipas Pas de Deux in Act 1 was quite virtuosic. One of the highlights was the series of pirouettes done by the girl from a kneeling position and ending with a turn by winding her leg around her partner's waist.

Melissa Aquinoo and Alvin Ilanza are extremely talented and naturally gifted individuals. Aquinoo has got a body made of rubber, beautifully arched feet and loose limbs. Ilanza is also blessed with elevation.

Clarity of footwork

However there were reservations: lacked the spark. I would have enjoyed Aquinoo's underlined elevation and expressive dancing if she had in her terms. A number of cruisers were airy but the landings of his aerial turns were off that night.

Aquinoo's supported multiple pirouettes were not secure and the lifts were laborious. They needed more rehearsals for seamless partnering.

A company's standard is based on the corps de ballet, who were the real stars that night. Ballet Manila is the only company in the country most of the corps are products of the school, many of whom are soloists. They had euphoric coherence and moved with exactitude especially in their formations.

The wills were precise and soft, making transitions use of their expressive shoulders and torso. The lyrical arms and clarity of the footwork revealed BM's standard of schooling.

As always, BM's classics were up to the mark but they are still losing "Giselle" to a higher level with more dramatic detail even if the mimes that might too already clear, and they can still show the audience motivation or minute details on why steps were choreographed for specific music in the first place.

They don't have to wait till they're past 40 to plumb the depths of dancing.

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

Ishmael Bernal by way of biography

He admonished me to 'tell all' in writing his bio.
But what if I died ahead of you, I asked him.
He replied that there was a 15-year window to the HIV virus

FILM director Ishmael Bernal (Sept. 28, 1928-June 2, 1996)

By Jorge Aruego
Contributor

WHEN ISHMAEL BERNAL died in 1996, his coffin had to wait an hour or so, unattended, in the back of the domed chapel of the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

A memoir friend of ours who happened by found the setting outrageous and fairly hilarious. "But what are you doing here?" he heard himself asking incredulously.

Over a decade earlier, Bernal had repaired with a luxury hearse to a funeral parlor to assess his grandmother's embalmment and for a full minute was confronted at the sight of a cadaver and ceremonies that bore no resemblance to anything he had seen before. It turned out that the clinic's now-departed mortician had been disperhaps by mistake to Cagayan Valley.

A gang of Bernal's friends now huddled together in the mortuary chapel. They could not do anything but commune in hushed tones outnumbered laughters, bruised heads knocking our mother like tramp-cats crashing and unwinding to a dirge.

But it was supposed laughter. It faded in and out of our lives. It stopped no entire sequence in "Himala by Night." It was grist for Bernal's mill where all his friends worked at one point or another, as part of a chorus of laughter.

His coffin would be moved late in the day to the UP Film Center, where it would lie in state for a week. At venue, it was positive. It had enough room for borrowed beatitudes and words and comedies in Bernal's mishaps and politics.

Before he died, Bernal had finally agreed, after years of hardsliding, to let the Film Center's director, who he would have attracted from Paris where he had consulted to introduce a Gertrude de Leon film to a French audience at the June 12 Independence Day celebration that year.

It was the idea of Virginia R. Moreno, who at that time was the Philippine representative to the Unesco office in the French capital. A 20-min print of the Gertrude de Leon classic had been left to gather dust and mold in 1960 process hounding for decades until the Germans offered to restore it. She would take along for good measure one of Bernal's own, "Nino," which had French subtitles.

Bernal did not make it to Paris. He died June 2. He had always stood in awe of Inno De Leon's precisely framed and impeccably

SUNDAY, 21

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HOROSCOPE

By FRANCES DRAKE

TODAY'S STARS You have style and panache. You're also very fun and entertaining. People are charmed by your presence and enjoy what you say. You make different from most ones. Nevertheless, you work hard for your successes. You work well with body language. You're also well known for something important to study or observe. Whatever you have to do is valuable or fortunate, as positive. **Birthdays of:** James Ivory, director; Dave Wyndorf, entertainer; Jessica Hardy, athlete.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You suddenly might feel very good about something, because you know that now luck is going to change for the better. Try to probably work. Trust your intuition and feelings.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Group activities might have a big advantage for you. Your interaction with others gives you an increased sense of independence and personal power. Support.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Socializing consumption might mean that really boosts your reputation with your peers in a positive way. Some of you could get a raise, praise, notice or even promotion.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Surprise opportunities to travel come to you might be in your workplace. Similarly, some thing unexpected that you've been waiting for. Publishing, the media, the law or medicine.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Surprise gifts, goodies and wealth from other sources might come to you now. Some of you might be the surprise recipient of a gift that you've been waiting for. Be open and receptive to the things.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Partners, close friends and associates might be very important to you now. Be open to what they have to say. Your interaction with others gives you an increased sense of independence and personal power. Support.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Socializing consumption might mean that really boosts your reputation with your peers in a positive way. Some of you could get a raise, praise, notice or even promotion.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Surprise opportunities to travel come to you might be in your workplace. Similarly, some thing unexpected that you've been waiting for. Publishing, the media, the law or medicine.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Surprise gifts, goodies and wealth might go through now. Fun and family reunions could occur. Socializing in your dreams could be especially memorable.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You have a lot to say about your future now. It's a time to start to have a positive frame of mind. You feel more optimistic every day.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You may see more signs for hope in your romantic horizon, because they certainly exist. Some of you can make a difference.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Surprise good fortune could come your way right now. Be ready for this. Time you spend back is just the way ready for opportunities when they occur. This is now your lucky day and your lucky week!

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answers to yesterday's puzzle

3	1	9	2	6	8	4	5	7
4	6	8	5	1	7	9	3	2
5	7	2	4	9	3	6	8	1
8	4	5	9	3	6	7	2	1
9	3	1	7	8	2	5	4	6
6	2	7	1	5	4	3	9	8
1	5	4	6	7	9	2	1	3
7	9	6	3	2	1	8	6	4
2	8	3	8	4	5	1	7	9

Conceptis Sudoku By Dan Caron

		6	7		9			
	4			5			9	8
9				1				2
9			2		8			4
	6	5		7			8	2
1			5		3			9
5				8			9	
	2	9		3			1	
			6		2	4		

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Ishmael Bernal by way of biography

from page E1

composed scores added up to scenery enrichment and collapse.

At the French consulate where we had met a few days before we were to have left, he said he looked forward to the shows as a prelude to his new name as academia's conduit to the film industry. He was done with films. "Waiting" was his swan song.

The Film Center was pulverized in the groundshaker considered by the university when I met Bernal in a freshman Design class. I was "thin as a pin," he said, but he himself could not have been more substantial than a twiddle.

In the 1950s

We were both under 20. The university just turned 50, but already a grand-sized boat compared to the leviathans maintained by religious societies since Hapsburg times.

Bernal would have judge UP the greatest influence on his life and donate all his films, working scripts, and books (undoubtedly including some of mine).

It certainly felt like home to a generation that, cast out of the country's womb, had to dive straightaway into a crescendo involvement in war with imperial Japan only to outlive to a cowardly American dream of yet another conquest.

The Yalu rocked like a rooftop of nightmares, monstrosities, reminiscence, nocturnal remission and less than lucid dream. It was a boring time to be alive or to break out of the inertia of cycles ended to the hoof's interests.

The night bars thronged the war a chattering emporium for the timeless Filipinos, enough to keep us from opening our legs much afterward. But it seemed to have had the opposite effect. We stumbled for non-damage payments from the belligerents while excoriating our charity.

We existed a carousel of anarchism in the public realm: debunking combined, guerrilla during, missing flesh and bones, antigovernmenting wars, each side who would not see the dawn, and on in the tourist pamphlet: take on comfort women wherein the war-weary Japanese soldiers treated like students.

And when history suggested a Take 2, we gallantly sent a battalion to Korea, missing from Pidel Ramos, and generated enough curiosity to drag in Regino Apolos Jr. to mull. We found time and compassion to see the traffic in our timber for boosting in Buddha-land, as Japanese eco-studies have claimed. We even launched the first satellite in Asia.

His first daylight

Bernal remembered seeing fighter planes on fire, plummeting to earth to become objects of curiosity like whales to boys his age growing up de trop in Manila.

"You mean, when you joined during the war," I would interpose in the liminal we came to prefer for its formulaic irreverence and irony, error and error, "you didn't always look down at your rugby?"

He clearly remembered that he was looking, looking up for dear life, when he saw his first dogfight. He burst out laughing (how got back at me by saying at age 3 or 4 one didn't know enough of the vicissitudes [illegible] famous and knowledgeable. Someone must one entered a lot swinging like guys at the first Olympiads.

Bernal grew up in the Santa Mesa district where a sensitive streak persists to close, with his mother Flavia Bernal, in an extraordinarily savvy reader of passionate vistas of a matriced grandfather, Lope K. Santos, who had survived a Jazz Age image of a man in white shark-skin, beloved of ninologists and others. Kinship and fragile Spanish-speaking Tagalog.

They lived not far from where the conquistadores had built in late 16th-century a pied-a-terre, its back to a river which bisects the city before debouching into Manila Bay. It would pass on to American civil governors at the turn of the 20th century and to Filipino presidents since the end of the Pacific War, as the Yanks reference the backdrop to the Filipinos' camera role in the theater of World War II.

But a more important landmark than Malacañang Palace is Bernal was Embassy Theater, a minister's death from Nick Pidal-based radio, which provided him with an early arsenal of images to use later in what we called Project: Whatever, for Winning Hearts and Minds plan area, after an American hybrid of Medford Newton Kissinger vis-à-vis the exigencies of the war in Vietnam whose victory was elusive in the '60s. We shifted area as a realistic ancillary target and motivation of a film director's career.

Ishmael's dad

But how did they survive the war and the years that followed. I remember asking Bernal many times over.

He said that Nena (as he used to address his mother privately) must have accepted refunds from soldiers—refunds being generic for any activity that fetched subsistence money.

But we could not possibly bash on [illegible] that during a war, soldiers were more likely to have money and the means to make more.

A draw my attention to the fact that, five some years after we met, he never mentioned his father, but made brief references to an uncle in Mariano Toledo with whom his mother was linked.

I would be a consignor to the task of making it known to Nena that he had long known who his biological father was, that they had met before he went to France to get a literature in French at Aix-en-Provence, and that cinema was instrumental in introducing him to his father's family as well as to getting him to call Tio Mar "Dichol" toward the end of their lives which had come in fairly quick succession.

Bernal used to say, in getting me to agree to write his biography, that there was packing I helped and pretended to overlook the fact that I remembered only odds and ends and a wise-year details. So tempted me with the admonition in, by all means, "tell all."

He seems agreed in record a number of conversations on subjects usually considered germane to a biography. The tapes were mercifully lost in a fire that destroyed everything I had ever carried except what I was wearing and, by happy chance, a suitcase containing with Bernal's photos, notes and occasional journals, enough exercise to exert a bite.

"But what if I died ahead of you? What if I died of age?" I tried to get out of it once.

He gave me a baleful look, and that there was a 10-year window to the 80s year, and that he had long ago accepted that one of us would die from it. Then we burst out laughing.

Although laughter provided us the only mutually acceptable modernism to many an issue, it was not to say that our laughter never ended, or be a silence that followed was never uneasy, or an issue never recurred, or that remembering did not abhor the sarcasms that it inevitably disclosed.

The author was the writer of Ishmael Bernal's 1979 movie "Manila by Night."

AT THE UP Film Center where Bernal's retrospective is on display

French film festival ongoing at Shang

SEDUCED LA FLEUR SEDUS again this year's French Film Festival, which runs 'til June 13 at Shang Cineplex Cinema 6.

"Silence d'or" tells the nostalgic story of two brothers and a sister who all witness the disappearance of their childhood memories just as they need to relinquish their family possessions to ensure the succession of their late mother.

Enjoy a tale of friendship and other relationships via "L'Amour s'en mêle: À Deux," which chronicles the life of Michel, who dreams of meeting but experiencing the perfect romance in life and his friends debate the latest until they meet Angèle and Nathalie.

"Les Femmes de Dieu" is a comedy that invites one to share in the lives of five different family planning nurses, all in who advise young girls and women on what to do with their sexual freedom.

Further he drama oficiosa-

des, "La Graine et Mulet" tackles life at the port via main character Monsieur Bebe, a 66-year-old divorcee with a complicated family.

"La Fille Du Rer" tells the tale of jobseeker Suzine and her mother Louise. Louise tries to get Suzine a job with former acquaintance-turned-famous lawyer Samuel Hirsavin, which sets them on a dramatic collision course.

"Dans la Vie" is about Emilie, an elderly Jewish lady who is in need of regular home care. Just when her son Eric is about to reach the end of his rope, Muslim day nurse Jasmine offers to help out. Soon, a new relationship blossoms, and the women's lives are changed for the better.

"Le Premier Venu," a film by Jacques Doillon, follows the story of a 16-20-year-old woman's adultier family who embarks on a life-changing journey when she decides that she can drug that she can still give a love.

"Welcome" is a tale of love and life, chronicling the story of 17-year-old Bilal, whose journey to Europe is interrupted when he is stopped at the French side of the Channel. He soon meets Simon, a swimming instructor who eventually decides to risk all to win back his wife and her heart—by taking Bilal under his care.

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REVIEW

Less blood, fewer fangs in new Stephanie Meyer novella

By Rust S. De Vera

YOU WANTED VAMPIRES? Here they are, though they may not be the ones you're looking for.

Yes, Twilight saga author Stephenie Meyer did write "The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner: An Eclipse Novella" (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, New York, 2010, 178 pages), but this one won't send Edward Cullen and family

Instead, "Bree" is about a seemingly throwaway character who makes her first and final appearance in "The Twilight Saga: Eclipse." She is a new born—a freshly turned vampire—who is part of the motley crew which takes part in an ill-fated attack on the Cullens prior to the Volturi arriving in Forks.

If you understood what you just read, there's this to cheer back for you. "Bree" happens within the events of "Eclipse," and readers unfamiliar with the Twilight books will be utterly dumbfounded by the book's many series references.

There are many things that are patently different about "Bree." For one thing, the novella clocks in at less than 200 pages; while the other books in the Twilight Saga averaged 600 pages. It is also Meyer's first chance to publish a narrative by someone other than the human Bella Swan.

"I got to submerge myself in a totally new brand of vampire-mythology," Meyer explains in her introduction. "The newborn life was something I hadn't even gotten to explore."

Familiar faces

What you get is a somewhat wild but also useless vampire who is still trying to understand the world around her when she's not necessarily her three best friends/allies.

"I didn't believe in vampires before I was one," Bree thinks. "So it's the rest of the world didn't believe in vampires, then the rest of the vampires must be leveling others."

For there is so much she doesn't know. As her affection for Bella Swan's future husband Edward (or perhaps his stash) Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson) has without the Cullens and Bella, it just isn't compelling enough.

In a cheeky twist, she's donating part of the book's proceeds to the American Red Cross

Predictable

If anything, the book most closely resembles Meyer's 2008 novel, "The Host," accessible but also a bit on the predictable side. It is pretty easy to figure out who the creator is, and what his secret agenda is. The relative lack of consequence in terms of the entire saga makes the whole book feel like an extended bonus scene from a DVD.

Perhaps the book's slimmer wordcount is the fact that Bree—who will be portrayed by Jodelle Ferland in David Slade's upcoming "The Twilight Saga: Eclipse" movie—is just not as interesting as any of the other vampires are. You might feel bad for Bree, but you won't identify with her.

Meyer makes this guilty pleasure a little less guilty by donating part of the book's proceeds to the American Red Cross.

Unless you are a die hard fan of Meyer's prose, "The Short Second Life of Bree Tanner" is a one-time book strictly for Twilight fanatics, because it stands as one more chance to immerse themselves, however temporarily, in the world of Bella and Edward—if you're not yet sick of vampires forever.

Available in hardcover from [illegible] *book stores*

What Malcolm Gladwell saw

By Lito Gutierrez
Contributor

LAST MARCH, THE TELECOMS AND MEDIA mogul Manuel V. Pangilinan got a pie in his face—about an additive he delivered before his college alma mater, Ateneo de Manila, was found to have committed quite lifted from other people's speeches, among them the television President Barack Obama's. Pangilinan didn't write the speech himself, two of his staff copied and pasted, as it were, the winning quotes. In this article, Malcolm Gladwell will ask questions and suggested profanity for the plagiarists' dead.

But did he have to? Was the offense sufficiently egregious to nullify Pangilinan's otherwise stellar reputation as a businessman and philanthropist? According to Malcolm Gladwell, in his book "What the Dog Saw," maybe not, and suggests, in the chapter "Something Borrowed," that "borrowed" words should be taken in the context of the words' surrounding story and not. Having become a "victim" of plagiarism himself, the writer, "Instead of feeling that my words had been taken from me, I feel that they had become part of some grander canon."

Count Milan star not ring a bell among Filipinos, unless one is a dog lover who subscribes to the National Geographic channel. In America where pet ownership is the norm as a multi-billion industry, however, Milan, also as The Dog Whisperer, is no mere. To say that he is a dog trainer is only half true. The other half is that he is also a human trainer, i.e., he teaches—or, more accurately, reminds—humans how to treat dogs, and that one of the worst things a dog owner can do is treat his or her pet like a human.

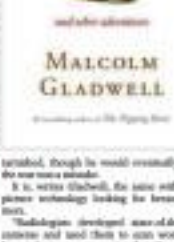
Why? Because a dog simply sees the world differently.

Nothing written about Gladwell indicates he owns a dog, or any pet for that matter, like the acclaimed New Yorker Magazine writer had the dog whisperer's perspective in mind when he put together "What the Dog Saw." Put together, but, not wrote. For "What the Dog Saw" is an anthology of Gladwell's articles he has written for his magazine. It is like his earlier bestseller "The Tipping Point," which was a collection of anecdotes to support his theory that more often than not, success is hinged on a seemingly inconsequential thing that would tip the balance (but would make a product or service instantaneously connect with the market.

Raising questions

In "What the Dog Saw," Gladwell goes on his readers a different lens through which accepted truths are seen from other perspectives, including, yes, a dog's. That's why he raises questions about how success (the "virtue" of plagiarism really is, taking into account history and perspectives. He also argues that what we see may not be what we would get. Gladwell illustrates this by juxtaposing what would seem like unrelated items. For instance, in the chapter "The Terror Problem," he connects mammography with George W. Bush's decision to launch the Iraq war.

In the runup to the war, retired general Colin Powell, Bush's secretary of state, argued before the United Nations that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and was ready to use them. No proof he offered: heavy satellite photos of structures and equipment that alleged were manufacturing, storing and moving facilities of the weapons. Neither weapons nor such facilities would be found and Powell's smear would forever be tarnished, though he would eventually say the war was a mistake.



It is, writes Gladwell, the same with the pattern recognition looking for lumps in breasts.

"Radiologists developed some of the most extensive and tacit tools to scan women's breasts for tumors, reasoning that, if you can take a nearly perfect picture, you can find and destroy tumors before they get out of control," writes Gladwell. "Yet there is a great deal of confusion about the benefits of mammography," he says, then points, "Is it possible that we place too much faith in pictures?"

The answer is, maybe. Because while indeed mammography may indeed have been responsible for saving women's lives, cancer-detecting technology itself has a long way to go. Its size a study in which, using the same set of mammograms, "one radiologist caught 65 percent of the cancers the first time around, another caught only 27 percent."

A bit of it depends on the expertise of the doctor who reads the mammograms. He says, "A modest estimate of mammography's benefit is that it reduces the risk of dying from breast cancer by about 10 percent."

So is Gladwell advocating against mammography? Certainly not. He is simply entering what cancer specialists themselves have been arguing about for years: mammograms drive, always seek a second, even third opinion. As he put it, "Mammograms do not have to be infallible to save lives."

As for reading satellite photos of alleged nuclear bunkers or missile sites, the lessons for military strategists are quite obvious.

Gladwell uses the same technique in explaining the rise of feminism in the 1970s, the dots not mention the high profile advocates of the movement, such as Gloria Steinem or Camille Paglia. Instead he writes that Shulie Firestone and Ros Spector developed their hate radio advertising campaigns of Clairol and Revlon, respectively. That would do as much for women's life as the burnings of the bra did.

Page after page after page, Gladwell explains why kids love ketchup and not mustard; reminds us that the curators of the 9/11 were a devout Catholic distinguished between cheating and smoking; argues why talent may sometimes be a liability; and gives job seekers a clue as to how to make themselves more attractive to potential employers.

"What the Dog Saw" is a cornucopia of information, a delightful, thought-provoking read for Trivial Pursuit aficionados. But Gladwell's genius is seen in how weaves his data into his yet very, arresting read.

In 'What the Dog Saw,' the author of 'The Tipping Point' puts on his readers a different lens through which accepted truths are seen from other perspectives, including, yes, a dog's

Fresh reads

'Panihinta X' the book is out

MILESTONE PUBLISHING, INC. has released "Panihinta X: Mga Bagabagang Senaryo," a collection of hilarious and insightful essays on how the gay life in the Philippines by Louie Cano. Panihinta is a street word that refers to a man who has discovered the mystery of love in the bosom of a fellow male, a man who is "pamang-mundo" [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

ENTERTAINMENT
Editor Bernie G. Pelarde

'Jaws' star turns up in LA junkyard

THE STAR OF "JAWS" HAS been found resting in a LA junkyard.

Ha, not Richard Dreyfuss—the shark! And this with the 35th anniversary of Steven Spielberg's classic blockbuster just around the corner.

To maximize thrill control over the creature, "Jaws" filmmakers built three sharks for the 1975 movie. Five died from the cruel cold. Of the three saved, the sharks were dubbed "Bruce" after Spielberg's lawyer, Bruce Ramer. The mortal creature were 25 feet long and weighed hundreds of pounds. The heads alone came in at 400 lbs. a piece, with jaws the size of a small human.

When reporter and "Jaws" enthusiast Gary Tarazo set out to track down Bruce's whereabouts, he went straight to the source—the director. A spokesperson for Spielberg explained that the original Bruce had all been destroyed.

But theories circulated on a Facebook page for the fictional shark that another Bruce might be out there. After a little research, Tarazo discovered that a deadly shark had indeed been out there. The original model, months after its brethren were constructed. It was created for display at Universal Studios Theme Park, where it hung by its tail for 25 years.

In 1996, the shark was taken down and shipped out to the Hamburger restaurant. Bruce was then shuttled, pleasing junkyards and finally found its entrance to a yard in the San Valley area of Southern California, just minutes away from Universal. Even the shark's architecture, Tarazo brought the team who built the set—set decorator, members for Alves and Ric Arbogast.

"It's the real one," Arbogast said after examining the creature. "It's Alvin, nice to see it again after 35 or 40 years. It's something that it's still here."

The discovery couldn't come at a better time. There's talk that Universal might be considering a 3D Jaws" remake—and somebody Tony Morgan in the shark-hunter role. Back to the silver screen, Bruce!

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KC: I was rebellious

GABBY and KC Concepcion

By Marinel R. Cruz

KC CONCEPCION admits she was a rebellious child.

"I mean, it's the same thing I chose to leave the country and study abroad, away from the probing eyes of the public. But I never did anything illegal or something to hurt myself," KC told reporters Entertainment recently.

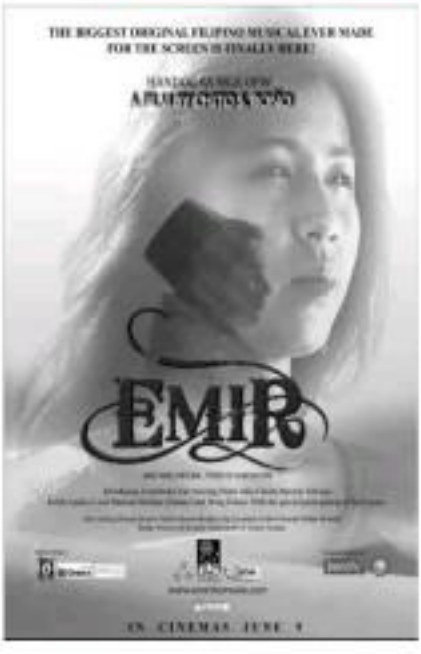
KC left for France in 2003 to take up International Corporate Communications at the American University in Paris.

KC (for Maria Kristina Concepcion) is the daughter of Gabby Concepcion and Sharon Cuneta.

Tough

She was encouraged to leave her father 12 years ago, following the annulment of her parents' marriage and Gabby's immigration to the United States.

She said it was tough growing up without her dad. "I kept asking my mom why my friends and classmates had their dad and I didn't. I didn't understand why whenever we celebrated Father's Day in school, I was excluded. There was also the issue of not being able to study in



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First show, last show

VIEWFINDER

Nestor C. Torre

AFTER FIVE LONG AND eventful years, model-turned-TV host-producer Tyra Banks has opted to end her popular talk-variety show, "Tyra."

We caught the program's last telecast recently and it prompted us to come up with a separate "First show, last show" notes on the highlights of its five-year run on the radio.

We caught some of the program's early telecasts and were amicably wowed off by its raucous emphasis on Tyra's "supermodel" persona. The show insisted as patron to many entities from the "caucasian" fashion industry and a shrill, snake-oil was watched by all.

It's a good thing that the show soon got a step to such sordid proceedings, and finally "normalized" its offerings to focus more on problems and issues affecting its generally youthful and female demographic.

This led "Tyra" toward its different chance to be more established "Oprah" show, the curly-colored talk-show network talk-show hosted by an African American woman, which was more traditional to program.

In addition, "Tyra" tentatively went out on a limb in terms of the issues it chose to weave, with the host audaciously playing a wide range of "underdog" topics. She hopes to pay off debts by selling the piece of land that her parents-in-control. Coming home means spending time with the father she hates for making an outlaw.

"I didn't want to cry into dorky camera lens, but that's basically what the script required," said Debra Bayza. "I didn't have a hard time with Bayza because we conducted an acting workshop before shooting the film. I talked them to just relax with each other and with me."

Debra Bayza, who first worked with Gabby in the B-gal-produced film "Three In my "Bonnie," said Gabby has really improved as an actor.

"She has intellectual," she wrote said. "Also, he no longer talks fast. I used to complain about that. His jerky movements, which used to annoy me as well, are now gone."

Debra Bayza said it took him a total of 11 days to finish filming. "We shot mostly in Bonifacio, Laguna and Quezon. He worked for only three to four times a week. A lot of our time was taken up by Gawilang," he explained. "I need control was a concern. We shot in Gawilang two days after the Pahiyas festival. We had to show less streets pieces workers a few arrows."

"I'll Be There," produced by Star Cinema, and Dir. Debra Bayza to be released starting June 16.

KC: I was rebellious

From page 1

a Catholic school. Bids with estranged parents weren't allowed in stands."

Despite all that, KC said, Sharon never spoiled of Gabby. "She told me (parents) sing stories about Papa. Their friends told me how 'good Papa was as an actor,'" said KC. "His family, Bayz's youngest sibling, who is closest to Sharon, had a lot of stories about him, too."

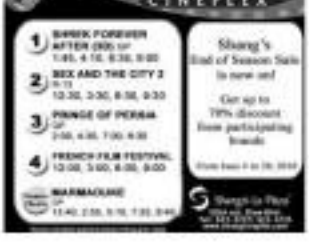
KC has been legally adopted by Sen. Ildee Feraglidonio, after married Sharon in 1996. KC was reunited with Gabby when the actor returned to the Philippines in 2000.

No promises

"At all fairness to Papa, he never made a promise that he didn't keep," said KC. "I still remember the time he told me he was leaving for the States. I was 13 years old. He chose to tell me the week right after I won a skating competition. He didn't break any promise; he never said when he'd be back."

KC and Gabby are cast together in a dramatic film titled "I'll Be There." The story, according to director Mario J. Celis Bayza, is "almost close to the truth."

The movie is about the New York-based Mink de la Cruz (KC) who returns to Manila shortly after her mother's death to find her father, Paolo (Gabby), she hopes to get off debts



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A 'Back to School' Special Advertising Feature
The Asia Express

Powerbooks turns a chapter with its new Greenbelt 4 store

By Joel R. Migue

JUST LIKE A DUST TWIST IN AN engrossing fiction/fiction book, Powerbooks specialty bookstore latris a new chapter with its newly renovated Greenbelt 4 store.

The refurbished Powerbooks outlet boasts of a more vibrant, hip, young and colorful environment that will sure be a haven for both the casual book reader and the book enthusiast. Like a wonderland of sorts, the bookstore takes you to a place where the reality of the outside and the fiction in literature are blurred together. It transforms the traditional customer thinking of "I am going to buy a book" to "I am simply walking around and I find myself wandering into a different world."

Once outside, the opening of its exterior styles soon provides every customer a feeling of comfort. The open expanse of the store is enhanced by its physical topography making browsing for books inviting and easy. Its new signage also offers new colors and an improved ergonic the flipping of the pages suggest that Power books will always be meeting with the dynamically varying needs of its patrons. The concept store look philosophy is that the store will remain continually flexible and transformative to the needs and demands of its customers.

The Powerbooks launch, which was held just recently, was graced by renowned personalities like Toni Peters/Valdez and Tina Yap, who co-hosted the program, David Celdran, Rene Elliott, DJ Mojo Jojo, among others. Sources "Shalap Loving" Roman, founder of National Book Store, also witnessed her

BOOKBIRD 'Hanap Loving' Roman with the new Powerbooks logo.

bookstore baby turns a new leaf.

Powerbooks is the premier specialty bookstore in the Philippines. It carries the most relevant selection of titles and it caters to every book lover's tastes and needs. When it opened its doors to the public on Aug. 18, 1998, Powerbooks proved to all book enthusiast a refreshing venue for their reading pleasure. It ravaged the passion of a literary icon and the sensibilities of a good bookstore when only the dish and routine of ordinary bookstores are available in the market. A perfect mix of reading, ambience, a coffee shop, and an accessible pond book or NBDB substances an ardent book lover's fancy may have, Powerbooks provides all of these. In addition, with a selection of more than 200,000 titles from various genres, Powerbooks gives its patrons the widest array of specialty books in a competitive price.

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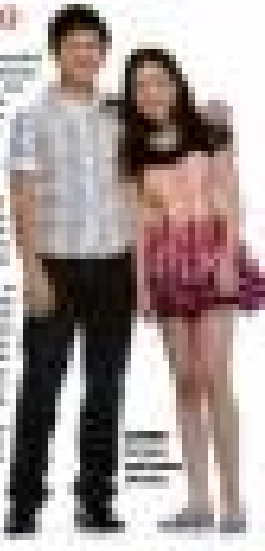
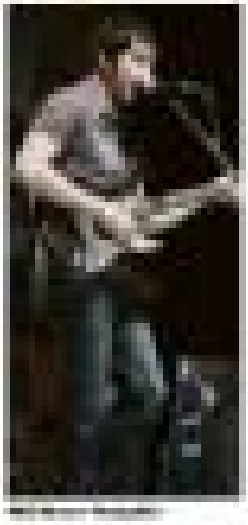
Powerbooks is also opening its newly renovated Greenbelt 4 branch with a bang! As a reward to its loyal patrons, the specialty bookstore also launches its Powerbucks promos. Here, customers can bring in their old books in good condition and exchange them...yes, exchange, no need for any kind of purchase for brand new books at its Powerbucks corner. Promo valid on all Saturdays and Sundays of June.

ENTERTAINMENT

Jolo Revilla smitten by Melissa Ricks

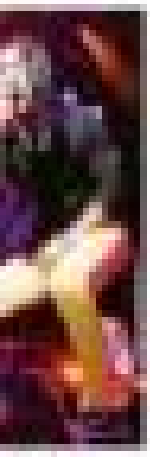
Teen star handles intrigues like a pro





Arnel Rico is sensual-looking entrepreneur

Nicholson on Hopper: My soul mate



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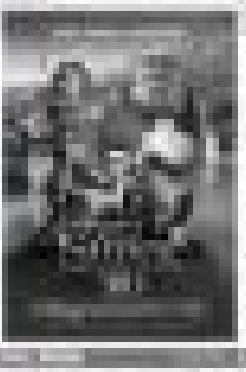

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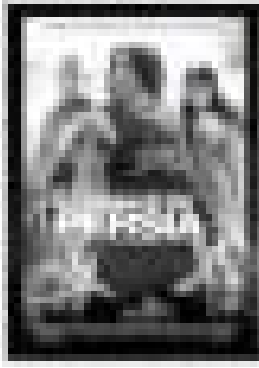

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NBS Book Express: Your convenience bookstore

Perhaps unbeknownst to most people, National Book Store has a chain of "convenience bookstores" in various parts of Metro Manila. The NBS Book Express chain is meant to be a neighborhood bookstore that conveniently serves surrounding residents who may not have the time to go to the large malls where the larger National Book Store branches are usually located.

The stores are smaller but still carry the complete assortment of school and office supplies that are often associated with National Book Store. In addition, the stores also carry basic reference books, bestsellers, bargain books and other services such as mobile phone load and photocopying. Other convenience store lines such as food, drinks, personal and home care items are also available.

NBS Book Express has 12 conveniently located stores at: G&P Mall, Sixto Palmares, Marikina City; 4 Plaza Cid, Plaridel, San Nicolas, Pasig City; 103 Retiro St., Sta. Mesa Heights, QC; Ateneo St., Prof. 3, QC; AJ Building, A. Mabini St., Kalookan City; Tandang Sora Ave. near Commonwealth Ave., Batasan, QC; Magsaysay Commercial Center, Dau St., Dau, Mabalacat, Pampanga; Unit 1, Ground Floor, Building 1, Cypress Tower, Kalayaan Ave., Poblacion, Makati City; 46 Shaw Blvd. cor. Tiendesitas, Pasig City; Mandaluyong D'Courtyard Mall, Quirino Ave., Parañaque; G/F Bidkemont Center, North Edsa, A. Veterans Village, QC; Lanao Central Mall, Harrison Ave., Ilaya, and Bajao Mall, Roxas Avenue, Angeles.

'The NBS Book Express chain is meant to be a neighborhood bookstore'

The 'Best' buys at the 'Best' prices

BEST TO NATIONAL BOOK Store for the best and most affordable finds. Choose from Best Buy, Best Buy Pals and NBS Basics for all your school needs.

The Best Buy 3 Subject Notebook is any student's ultimate writing companion with 180 sheets divided by five colorful tabs for hassle-free note taking. It also comes with a ruler and bookmark.

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National Book Store is the most complete and the most convenient one-stop shop this back-to-school season.

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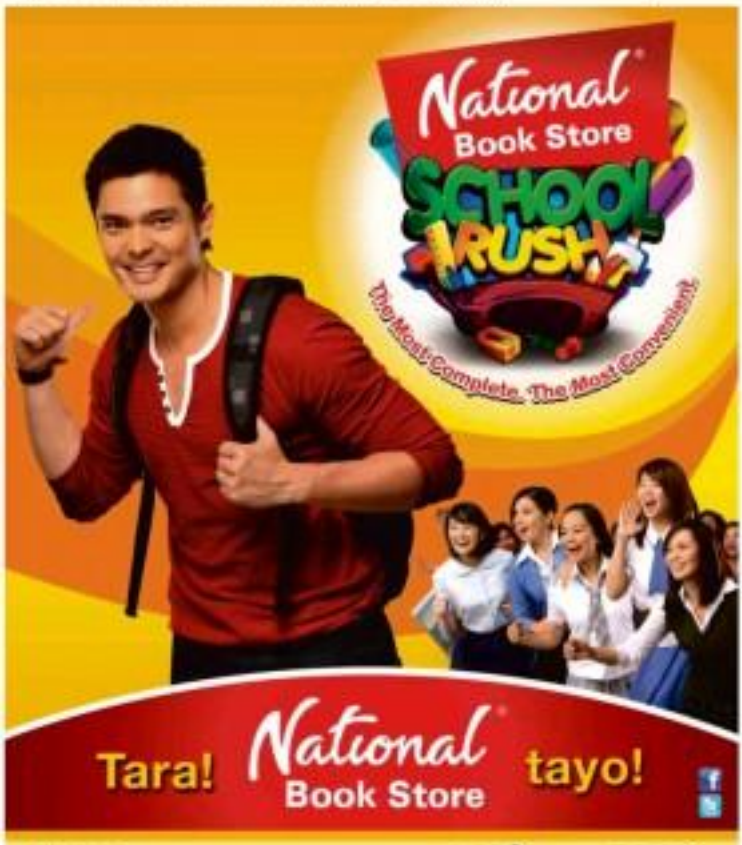

NumberWorks'nWords: Harnessing the power of fun and cool

NUMBERWORKS'NWORDS IS A GLOBAL math tutorial program that recently opened its third local branch in Greenhills, San Juan after the thirteen-year success of its first branch in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, and later of its Quezon City branch in Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights. Established in 1989 with locations in Australia, New Zealand, the UK, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the Philippines, Number-Works'nWords offers its specialized after-school tutorial program as a fundamental area of education that's not often considered a student favorite: mathematics.

Students from as young as kindergarten age to those in high school level can enroll at any of the three branches of NumberWorks'nWords. Designed by academic experts to complement schoolwork and build skills, understanding, and confidence, the math program is based on all areas of the current school curriculum - from addition to quadratic equations - and allows students to work at their own pace and level of ability.

What distinguishes NumberWorks'nWords from other individually focused learning programs is its "fun and cool" tutorial approach. More than just developing the children's solid foundation in mathematics, the program focuses on environments to which they can actually love, enjoy, and appreciate learning. It allows students to work at their own pace instead of having to keep up with - and possibly get discouraged by - the demands of a whole class. It makes use of custom-based games, richly developed modules, and inspirational software to lift children's attitudes and spark enthusiasm. It leverages technology to implement fun, computer-assisted learning, which is then supported by the positive reinforcement of tutors who have been trained extensively in the specialized usage of the NumberWorks'nWords system. Throughout the whole process, there's a consistent exchange of feedback between parents, tutors, and children - something that NumberWorks'nWords considers crucial to the success of its program.

It's an approach that has worked wonders. A growing number of parents are pleased with the learning outcome of the program, they feel that with NumberWorks'nWords children are easier to control of their subjects. While some may still initially raise their eyebrows at "fun and cool" - a catchphrase that has come to describe the program's delivery of math instruction - NumberWorks'nWords has demonstrated that the most effective way to help children achieve is by taking the pain out of math, and by harnessing the power of fun.

Step up in Primadonna this school year

AMIDST PRIOR TUITION AND SCHOOL supplies, new clothes and shoes are high on the shopping priority list of students as each school year nears. And if a girl can't have too much shoes at any given time, then Primadonna is the answer to her needs.

Is this a dream or is it shoe heaven? Perhaps the ultimate shoe store, Primadonna carries top-of-the-line imported footwear suited for every girl's taste. She can choose from a wide selection of simple or studded flats, rugged sandals, trendy booties, pumps, wedges, slingbacks, and dressy shoes.

Shopping in Primadonna's 20 branches nationwide is totally pocket-friendly with prices ranging from ₱600 to ₱1,500 a pair. Aside from shoes, Primadonna also offers high-quality imported ladies bags and accessories to complement the footwear.

Check out Primadonna's latest collection in any of their branches nationwide: SM Megamall, SM City Marikina, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Landmark Makati and Landmark Trinoma, SM branches in Baguio, Pampanga, Batangas, Lipa, Marilao, Sta. Rosa, Cebu, Naga, Dumaguete, Bulacan, Tuguegarao, Cabanatuan, Mall in Cagayan de Oro, Pavilion Mall in Bacolod, and Marquee Mall in Pampanga. Watch out for Primadonna's newest opening soon at SM City San Lazaro this June and SM City Manila in August.

LEARNING

Editor Chele Bacud Formoso

Olongapo gets its first news reading nook

By Inquirer Learning Correspondent

JAMES "BONG" GORDON wants "to bring back English" to Olongapo although, if he had his druthers, he would want city residents to master the King's (the Queen's) new really) English.

The mayor of Olongapo, the city that used to be chock-by-jowl with the major United States naval base Subic, is not looking back in the most robust, huge-vessels, gargantuan aircraft carriers, allegiant) thousands of Americans servicemen shore every week.

Gordon turned his eye on a globalized future, when the world will be more like a single community with people of different races and cultures connected by a few shared languages, with English probably spoken by most, if not all.

Gordon, younger brother of Senator Richard and namesake of their late father, also a former mayor of Olongapo, would like English-speaking foreign tourists, but is by such luminous, to help reach the language.

But whether or not he gets his wish, he has, in the meantime, found a quicker and more convenient fix for the gap he wants to close by making the reading of an English language in and about a daily table among Olongapo's young.

The mayor, who recently won a third and final term, sees a collateral benefit in turning young Olongapoites into newspaper readers. Mindful of the results of the recent elections, with dance and celebrity reality hosting competitions, Gordon says, "We have to produce intelligent voters who still elect good leaders."

So this school year, through the initiative of one of Metrobank's 2009 outstanding Teachers, Ria E. Intingan, the Sofio E. Brown Elementary School (Sebes), where Intingan teaches English, will get its own Inquirer Learning Center (ILC). Intingan, who was also a partner teacher in the Inquirer in Education's "Issue-Based Reading" social reading project last year, sought the mayor's sponsorship through Sibilina Candero, head of Sebes Parents-Teachers Association.

It is quite natural that the school is the first to be inspired to. The school, headed by principal Virginia A. Mira, got The Best School Award in Reading for SY 2006-2007 from the Department of Education division office in the Olongapo City. It was also cited for the significant improvement of its students' performances in division, regional, and national achievement tests.

Sebes was built in the 50s there in 1953 and named after Nellie E. Brown, a grade school teacher who founded a group of American teachers who arrived in the town to educate the children of the district supervisor, both offer in the school.

Gordon is only too happy to partner with Inquirer. Of the seven papers he gets every day, members of his staff see to each the Inquirer first. The mayor's sponsorship means that, like other schools with an ILC, Sebes will get five copies of the Inquirer every day, five days a week, for SY 2010-2011.

Gordon, whose slogan is "Fighting for Excellence," is not worried that his generosity toward Sebes will result in an avalanche of similar requests. Olongapo has 24 public elementary schools and four national high schools.

"As long as the budget allows, I will consider it," says Gordon.

ILC Cyclone owners at Sebes Mira, Intingan and Candero

Playgrounds for the MIND

Member Schools

Cutting-edge culinary education for degree holders

SINCE ITS FOUNDATION IN 2005, ENDERUN Colleges, through its flagship program in Bachelor of Science in International Hospitality Management major in Culinary Arts, has set the standards for culinary education in Southeast Asia. In 2007, Enderun became the first Filipino-owned institution to be partnering with Alain Ducasse Formation, the professional training center of Alain Ducasse in France.

Alain Ducasse, one of the most celebrated of modern French chefs, is one of the two chefs in the prestigious Michelin Guide's history to run restaurants carrying three-star ratings in three cities. His establishment, Alain Ducasse au Plaza Athénée (ADPA) in 1999 is recognized for its culinary methods and to provide training and consultancy services to the world's top chefs.

The academic partnership between ADF and Enderun molds the culinary philosophy and teaching methodologies of the two institutions, and offers students the opportunity to undergo rigorous training in foundational and cutting-edge culinary methods under the watchful eyes of the ADF-Enderun culinary team. The collaboration also results in the ADF-Enderun Certificate in Culinary Arts Program, a post-graduate program that can be completed in less than two years when taken full-time.

At the heart of the ADF-Enderun teaching philosophy is theory, demonstration, and practice. The Enderun Culinary Center, where all culinary classes are held, adheres to this philosophy. Built in collaboration with ADF, it meets the chefs' international standards in culinary teaching facilities. The building houses hot kitchen laboratories, a pastry kitchen laboratory, a preparation kitchen, and a culinary amphitheater. To ensure maximum supervision, instructors conduct each classes. Enderun also offers the student workstation to students only at two students per workstation and eight workstations per laboratory class.

Students also receive an internship for three to eight in a real-world setting the whole range of knowledge they have acquired throughout their training. Students have the unique opportunity to take their internship in several chain Ducasse restaurants worldwide, or in any of Enderun's over 150 industry partners.

With this international culinary training, as validated by the prestigious ADF-Enderun Certificate in Culinary Arts, graduates from Enderun will have passed the standards of Alain Ducasse Formation, and will be sought by hotels and restaurants here and abroad.

For inquiries, please visit Enderun's Fort Bonifacio campus at 12th Campus Avenue, McKinley Hill, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, or call (632) 856-5000, or visit its website at www.enderuncolleges.com.

How fares Nursing?

WITH CLASSES ABOUT TO BEGIN IN THE next couple of weeks, colleges and universities all over the country are busily preparing for the wave of students it is going to draw. At Our Lady of Fatima University as with other colleges and universities offering Nursing, the course still has the greatest number of enrollees. Not as big a number as 2 or 3 years back, but still a significant number. Our Lady of Fatima University still remains to be one of the favored universities for people who want to pursue a career in Nursing. The figure-makers one pause to think and assess how Nursing shared from OFUs are doing in their careers.

Our Lady of Fatima University's College of Nursing is the oldest 'college' of OFU. From a modest beginning of 180 nursing students in the 1970's, the school watered to a population of 3000 persons passing mark in the 1976 nursing board examinations. Since then, OFU's College of Nursing has consistently produced topnotchers. For November 2009, the college got top 6, 8 and 9, and top 5 last July 2009, bringing the total to 30 topnotchers for the past 5 years; and 60 topnotchers in the last 10 years.

Under dean Lowell Santos' helm, the college continuously innovates its curriculum to meet standards required by advanced medical institutions abroad. Part of the innovations is the inclusion of the first and most comprehensive virtual laboratory in the Philippines wherein students are exposed to varied simulated medical scenarios. Another innovation is the E-Learning laboratory wherein classroom learning is supported and complemented with lessons from the Internet in which students could access from home.

In the recent Annual Homecoming held last December 2009, familiar faces with familiar names proudly shared their new titles and experiences. Most were just home for the holidays and were based in different parts of the United States. Off these, several are chief nurses in New York, Chicago and California and others specialize in Operating Room duties like Rebecca Gilbert and Michael Gonzales. Some opted to stay and serve in the Philippines. Of these, some entered the academe like Aurora Ontanio who is currently a dean in a prestigious nursing school and Nanette Sotto-Ballena, dean of the College of Nursing in Adventist University. And others who chose to practice their profession such as Arlene Geronimo, chief nurse of Dongzon Diaries Hospital in Bulacan, Bulacan.

The alumni all agree that the stiff curriculum and pioneering methods of OFU, including the integrated NCLEX Review Program greatly helped them in their Nursing careers.

OFU's College of Nursing was recently recognized as a CHED Center of Development by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). OFU was recently granted Autonomous Status by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for its "accomplishments, adherence to quality assurance, and commitment to public responsibility and accountability as a higher education institution." OFU has been producing topnotchers in the area of Medicine, Nursing, Physical Therapy and Medical Laboratory Science.

DLSU-D lotes 2010 Outstanding Staff and ASP

DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY-DASMARIÑAS (DLSU-D) THROUGH ITS Human Resources Management Office (HRMO), continues its culture of paying tribute to its exemplary staff with its Staff Recognition 2010 held May 19 at Gymnasium, La Salle. After thorough screening of the 21 candidates, John Paul Rastulo of the HRMO emerged as the 2010 Outstanding Staff of the Year. On the other hand, Gladdon Abing II, a member of DLSU-D, was hailed for the third consecutive year as the Administrative Service Personnel of the Year, making him the first multi-awarded of the Outstanding Administrative Service Personnel. Both Rastulo and Abing were called to the stage for individual hugs, awe having to go to work every one weekends and holidays but none complained, rather they just work more ardently and finish their tasks with high abilities. They are ranked among the rare few who embody the Lasallian tenets of faith, service, and communion not only to the confines of their work but in their personal lives as well. Staff Recognition 2010 also listed all staff who are former officers of the Kabalikat ng DLSU-D, "devi-recently finished their master's degree, and the dedication staff who have served in the University for five, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years. The Insanely Award and Conscientiousness award were also given in the ceremony.

Internationalization of SBC-GSB

ORDINALIZE THE SAN BEDA COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS facility its dean, Dr. Ramon Palumbo Roque recently met with officials from the University of Newcastle, Australia for initial talks on internationalization possibilities. With dean Roque are (L to R): Sec. Tarcisio Ramos, SBC Alumni Association; Mrs. Rev. Fr. Aloysius Manansan, OSB, Rector - president; Rev. Basil Aparicio, OSB, Rev. Gerigio Benatsuma, OSB; Dr. Edgardo Bolinao, and Prof. Pangs Carmona of San Beda College and chancellor Stephen Belinkie and Head of faculty at the Waterhouse from the University of Newcastle.

Scholarship grants for public school teachers

THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OF THE University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) will award 40 scholarship grants for public school teachers who qualify for full scholarship to the UA&P Graduate School (GSB) education program for academic year 2010-2011. The MEd in Education program follows a two-year curriculum and currently offers two majors: Educational Leadership, which is geared primarily for educators who are occupying or who are being prepared for leadership and key academic and administrative positions in their schools, especially those in basic education; and Child Development and Education which aims to develop early childhood educators and specialists (preschool and primary school teachers and administrators), child development counselors, and researchers/consultants on early childhood issues and development. The curriculum also offers opportunities for hands-on learning experiences for young children. For more information, contact Josephine Ibarra or Dr. Teodora Gole at UA&P School of Education and Human Development at 634-0838 and 637-0662 local 2118.

UE Manila beefs up course offerings

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST (UE) MANILA IS KNOWN AS THE COLLEGE OF becoming a leading provider of highly-skilled, highly-competitive, values-oriented professionals for the travel-tour and hospitality industry in the country and the world. UE Manila's College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) now offers a Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management (BSTM) degree program following the two-year Associate in Tourism Management (ATM) course (SY 2007-2008). The UE BSTM program follows closely the CHED-standards curriculum and the international standards. Real career opportunities lie ahead for UE tourism graduates throughout the industry, and tourism sectors, in both private and government. Locally and internationally, tourism graduates can find jobs in major hotel chains, recreation and resort centers, tour and travel service providers, cruise lines and airlines, or in the Department of Tourism and Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila or in its branches in the provinces and abroad. UE's tourism programs are the UE Caloocan CAS' Airline, Air Philippines and Century Pacific Inn, welcomes UE BSTM graduates for employment, as well as companies, mostly owned by UE alumni, in the tourism and hospitality industry where UE has linkages and agreements. Like UE CAS Caloocan, UE CAS Manila's BSTM boasts of well-experienced and highly-qualified faculty members, excellent and up-to-date training facilities, laboratory and equipment and library holdings in line with UE's periodical rebranding, ranging almost with industry standards.

STI seals partnership with Amadeus

AMADEUS, A LEADING TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY PARTNER AND TRANSACtion processor for the global travel and tourism industry, recently signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with STI to focus on further improving the extensive hands-on training of its students in the field of Hospitality and Tourism. The MOA was signed May 31 at the STI Academic Center in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. As part of the MOA, Amadeus will provide STI with its enhanced version of the Amadeus Learning City, an advanced e-learning website which offers users a variety of self-paced courses in reservations, fares and airline ticketing. The MOA also includes the provision of Amadeus training and skills on the use of the Amadeus Selling Platform - the computerized travel information and Global Distribution System which contains information about schedules, fares, and other travel-related services, through which reservations can be made, and where tickets can be issued. The Amadeus GDS will be helpful for students who will be taking the said programs because this will allow the students to explore the intricate world of booking and reservations. In addition, the complementary components of the system, which includes hotels, cars, cruises, and travel insurance, will equip STI students and graduates students with skills that will give them an advantage in the travel and tourism industry.

Informatics offers courses that allow students to work after their first year of study

INFORMATICS PHILIPPINES IS OFFERING COURSES FOR IT STUDENTS and professionals who want to get work-class skills in the shortest time. The school provides higher education on the fields of Information Technology and business, offering short courses, diploma programs and bachelor degree programs which run for three or four years. The school adopts the British system of education for its courses - its unique Customized Programs allows students to acquire specialized skills in IT as early as their first year of study. A certificate of completion is awarded after every year, qualifying students to work immediately. A student can become a junior programmer or IT practitioner after his first year at Informatics. Each additional year will provide higher qualifications and more advanced skills that will open the doors for a high-end IT career in the chosen field. A student also has the option to take international exams every term in order to earn an international diploma when they graduate - this is validated by the National Computing Center (NCC) from Manchester, UK.

Proud to be a Theresian

TOSS THEIR MORTAR BOARDS IN THE AIR, and Janet Garcia, the University of Santo Tomas take pride and congratulates Ellen Joy A. Garcia for being one of the topnotchers in the May 2010 CPA Board Examinations. Ellen, who graduated cum laude in 2009, got the fourth highest passing rank of 92.43 percent. The passing rate of the graduates of the 2010 AB-BS College of Accountancy is 76 percent. Congratulations to the board passers and may you continue to be "imbued with Aquinas unending grace" to be competent, committed and compassionate CPAs.

LPU excellence: Lima cadets qualify for MSAP

AFTER HAVING PRODUCED 11 GRADUATE TOPNOTCHERS IN JUST 18 months, LPU's Lyceum Maritime Academy-Lipa (LMA-Lipa) seems to be unstoppable in establishing a culture of excellence. The Philippine-Japan Manning Consolidation Council Inc (PJMCC), recently announced the results of Maritime Assessment Program with Lima's 13 BSMT and 5 BSMarE cadets, shortlisted, to recognition of their excellence and as nominated in the Senior Commissioners of Instructions No.08 Series of 2009, the qualified MSAP cadets receive the P50,000 grant from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa), under the Incentive Program for Top Maritime Cadets. Among the Lyceian MSAP cadet passers are Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) Aquino Oliver A., Arat Dhon Jr. M., Dimaano Billy Ray O., Sumbise Alden E., Isla Brian S., Langoman Kelvin M., Magtibay Arvel C., Mercado Rhodelio S., Pampolo Frenson A., Pinotherrence Ryan F., Sison Christian M., Vergara Ian L., and Bright Noel Kevin Josef E. Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMarE) Cuenca, Henry M., Dulay Jonile Jr. C., Mateo Ray William V., Paulaa Jan Ferdinand Angelo S. and Plata Kenn J. G.

Multitasking does not work

A STUDENT TYPES on her laptop, following quizzes on her knees, a mug of coffee to her right. She texts a boyfriend, scrolling from time to time to the local. Beside him is her cellular phone, vibrating and flashing every time a message arrives. The television set in front of her is showing "Glee."

Somehow the student manages to finish her paper while listening to Lady Gaga, answering her phone, and watching "Glee" simultaneously.

At least that is what she tells her parents when they ask her to turn off the TV, to teachers who tell her to remove the headphones, to counselors who try to help her develop better study habits.

"There is no way you can study with all these things happening in front" they say.

"Oh yes, we can," she replies. "We are the multitasking generation."

Attention deficit

It is no coincidence that the multitasking generation is also the attention-deficit generation.

When we try to do more than one demanding activity at the same time, most likely we will fail. In class, if students try to listen to the lecture, while secretly sending text messages to their friends under the table, assume that the teachers know such, they may think they are succeeding in both tasks.

But what is really happening is that they are switching back and forth between the two. The effort expended in doing three or four things dramatically is greater than if they tried to do the tasks one after the other.

What is worse, students become more error-prone when they multitask. They will more likely miss important points of the lecture and misspell their messages or even send it to the wrong person.

In her book "Rapt: Attention and the Focused Life," noted, award-winning behavioral science writer Winifred Gallagher says, "multitasking is the opposite of back to mindfulness. In many cases, your ability to do two things (simultaneously) is impaired because both tasks draw on one or more of the same finite processing systems in the brain. For activities that involve language, such as composing, watching TV, or simply thinking, for example, there's just one major channel through which you could input and receive output."

There are occasional exceptions to the rule, says David Meyer, a cognitive scientist at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, but generally, "if you're, say, trying to listen to someone on the phone while typing your e-mail, something has to give."

Using brain scans as magnetic resonance imaging, psychologists from the University of California Los Angeles have discovered that when we focus on a demanding task, we primarily rely on our brain's hippocampus (which governs memory). But when we are distracted by things such as text messages, we unconsciously switch to another part of the brain, the striatum (which governs routine activities).

Fragmented recollection

"As a result," says Gallagher, "even if you get the job done, your recollection of it will be more fragmented, less adaptable, and harder to access than it would be if you had given it your undivided attention."

To make things worse, multitasking requires more time than if we do the tasks one at a time. Yes, you read it right. People multitask in order to save time but, in the end, they spend more time doing several things at once.

Gallagher mentions on an institution expert who, after studying body cues, says, "If your train of thought is interrupted even for a second, you have to go back and say, 'Where was I?' Those are stop-and-go cues each time you reload everything into memory. Multitasking creates cognitive and people aren't as good at it as they think they are."

Multitasking is dangerous for learning. Research shows that American teens spend an average of 6.5 hours a day in the electronic world and, most likely, many spend much more time. Increasingly, Filipino youths are following their American peers' example. In the assessment of their capacity to learn.

Cases of students with attention-deficit disorders are increasing, and students increasingly find it difficult to pay sustained attention in class. What is more disturbing is the rise in anxiety, depression, and many of our children cannot sustain them.

According to Gallagher, Meyer says "kids need to work at developing the capacity for the concentrated, sustained attention that's required in deep (many satisfactory, not just the skill of flitting among them. Scientists didn't invent the theory of education while he was multitasking at the Swiss patent office."

To students who call themselves the multitasking generation, Gallagher has this to say: "If you grow up assuming that you can pay attention to several things at once, you may not realize that the way in which you process your information is a political act too. When you're locally focused on routine (unthinkingly demanding situations on high school or college, you may find that you've traded depth of knowledge for breadth and that your capacity for concentration is weakened. You wonder our children find it difficult to read good books, solve math problems, or even understand science concepts. They are not lazy because of school work overloading us. They are tired of multitasking on assignments. Dan Inch learns of the millions of friends they have on Facebook. Or do his friends, finding engage learning, training consultant, said "death" referred to people who refused to accept and recognize that sign language was a legitimate language.

Public gentleness and learners documented the event and also served as interpreters, performers, presenters, movers, models, technical staff and ushers. Ensuring and signing to "Pambansang" Minerva Aguilar and Emelie Gonzales showed the power of interpreters to translate the amazing emotions and feelings of a song in sign signs, body movements and facial expressions.

Lawyer Andy Alito II, Bajed was master of ceremonies while Michael S. Pefiaa, Pasig sign language speaking officer, was master of ceremonies.

The event was attended by 2006 Golden Hands Awardees Jessie Blanca, Jay Grimal, Ronda Lodula, Bise Andrada, Jun Zeballa and Becky Gamos.

Grand speaker Julius G. Andrada, vice president of the Philippine Federation of the Deaf (PFD), lauded Pasig for recognizing dedicated hearing people.

He encouraged his audience to listen both sign language and deaf culture as the two were inseparable. He also appealed for greater support to making society respect and accept the unique identity of the deaf.

In his closing message, Grand Golden Hands Awardee Ferdinand T. Park, Makati, said June 18, 6 p.m., in Cuneta I of SM City Bacolod.

Workshops will be held at the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music, Manila, Ayala Museum, Makati, and University of St. La Salle, Bacolod. Each member of the quartet has offering teaching workshops.

The tour is under the auspices of The Rhythm Pond Americas Music Abroad program, a partnership between Arts at Lincoln Center (ALC) and the US Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The program is designed to promote cultural exchanges with audiences worldwide.

The US Embassy has partnered with the Greenbelt Hills, UST Conservatory of Music, Filipinas Foundation, Ayala Museum, SM City Bacolod, Jazz Society of Bacolod and University of St. La Salle for the rest of the jaze group.

NY jazz group to give free concerts, classes

THE DIVY YORK CITY-BASED Mark Guiliana Jazz Quartet will be in the Philippines starting today. The week-long visit...is organized by the United States embassy in Manila and Here Tech Creative Center, is part of the quartet's Asian tour that includes Russia, South Korea, and China.

The quartet will perform live and conduct workshops for young Filipino musicians in Manila and Bacolod City.

It will showcase its post-bop jazz approach to original and standard jazz compositions. Influenced by the music of John Coltrane, Charlie Parker, Bitches Brew, Miles Davis and Herbie Hancock, the group's music is relentless and energetic, and features a lot of improvisation.

The group, which has gone on tours the past five years, will perform in Makati and Bacolod City next week. Live performances will be held June 10, 8 p.m., at Greenbelt 3 Park, Makati, and June 15, 6 p.m., in Cuneta I of SM City Bacolod.

Workshops will be held at the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music, Manila, Ayala Museum, Makati, and University of St. La Salle, Bacolod. Each member of the quartet has offering teaching workshops.

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Green and free film screenings

ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS are invited to celebrate free screenings of the SM Supermalls' 2010 Green Film Festival every Wednesdays and Sunday of the month starting June 21.

The festival is part of SM Cares, an initiative of SM Prime Holdings through SM Cares to create shorts Environment Day.

Another activity is the staging of the Leadership Conference theme featuring former United States Vice President Al Gore, in the May June 8 at the SMX Convention Center at Mall of Asia.

Four documentaries will be showcasing the festival at 10 SM malls nationwide to keep Filipinos learn more issues of effects happening to the environment.

"State of the Planet" (2002) Discovery Channel talks about continental distinctions and extinction of the species.

"Mysterious" from the Wild" (BBC) examines how global warming is affecting the Earth.

"The 11th Hour," Leonardo DiCaprio explores the devastating effects on the planet of carbon dioxide emissions.

"Planet Earth" (BBC) offers a most perspective on the earth's land wilderness and wildlife.

SM hopes to reach and educate one million public school children through the effort.

Tickets to the Louise shop Conference Series 3 is now available through TicketMat. Call 9151555 or e-mail skyper-to-room@ticketmat.com.

Golden Hands Award for friends of the deaf

THE GOLDEN HANDS AWARD was handed out recently to professionals who had served the deaf community for 15 years and more.

Those on the honored list, the award stated to given out by the Philippine Association of Interpreters for Deaf Empowerment (Pade). The brainchild of Pade chief executive officer Alfredo D. Colada Jr., the award is the first of its kind in the Philippines.

This year's honorees were Arsen V. Abreau Jr. (Baguio City PFD Center), Rhoden Rosanna Bonifacio (Professor), Bino Vicki, Anatolio Cabrera-Cunningham (Integrated Special School, Mgt City), Linda Hilarcos Celestino (Notre Dame Elementary School), Rosalinda J. Espino Jr. (Manila Christian Computer Institute for the Deaf), Marcelo Dungaran, Bro. Bernardo Singh (Philippine Cultural Miscellanea Living Jehudic High School), Ms. Isabella Rabacio-Quebral (Mariano College), and Ricardo D. de los Santos (Las Pinas North Integrated High School).

The late Belen III. Montero of the Philippine School for the Deaf received a posthumous award.

All the awardees have been engaged in community and outreach activities, sharing their skills and talents without monetary reward.

Leroy V. Un Pade board chair, commended the awardees for their unselfish and untiring service to the deaf community.

PADE CEO Alfredo D. Colada jr. speaks as secretary Alicia Amorpersio ups.

Expo to feature top students' business concepts

THE PHILIPPINE FRANCHISE Association (PFA) will showcase outstanding business plans and concepts of students in the Young Entrepreneurs Section of the 19th Philippine International Franchise Conference and Expo (PIFCE) July 16-18 at the SMX Convention Center, Pasay City.

The expo is a one-stop shop of the most successful and tested franchise brand names in franchising as well as new concepts.

The Young Entrepreneurs Section, is an integral component of the Expo's Incubation Center. It will showcase award-winning and excellent business plans developed by students, assisted by business business entrepreneurial competitions such as the Best Business Idea and Development Award (Bida) of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and Entrepreneurship Educators' Association of the Philippines, Inc. (Enabe).

Organized by PFA and co-organized by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company Business Solutions and PLDT SME Nation, it is Southeast Asia's biggest franchise show.

Good University's Mark Collee Pineda is one such case. University's Bluebird by sophomore, built 1000 Bida award. He said the said's Incubation Center exhibitions. Last year's Expo Space they were University of Cebu's Robert to Jac Wilson College's Kaohagan and University of Mindanao Bonanga-Davao's Computer Science. They'r Cone Pasta and Sisig Vinegar Crayons.

Some 30,000 visitors are expected at Franchise Expo 2010.

Call (02)7261 to 67 or (0917-8020702, e-mail pfa@pfa.org.ph or visit www.franchise2010.com.

Christian school pushes Singapore math

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS NOW implementing the internationally recognized Singapore Math program is Victory Christian International School (VCIS) in Pasig City.

Singapore is recognized globally as having the best mathematics curriculum. Its students ranking first in math and science assessments.

Studies by the Trends International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) show that Singapore children excel in all areas because of the training they get from the unique curriculum called Singapore Mathematics and emphasizes real life value-oriented learning.

In the Singapore Math approach and bad, students master core concepts first before solving more abstract problems. The program is extremely visual and constantly involves visual problems, thus encouraging the understanding of mathematical properties and connections even at numerical flavors.

VCIS coach teacher Sidney Ferrer said Singapore math was based on progression. Students first learn the single the use of objects, followed by the use of pictorials to solve abstract problems.

She said the curriculum also emphasized model drawing to help children to organize information and solve problems step by step.

Ferrer, who has a master's degree in mathematics, said, in teaching multiplication, for instance, children did not have to memorize the multiplication tables. Instead, they were made to master addition first through pictorials and concrete ones – methods that were simply just fast track additions.

The curriculum is geared to raise others Singaporean kids ranked first in mathematics in TIMSS. In 2003, the countries participated in TIMSS, only ten percent passed the 90th percentile grade or bell's.

Singapore's fourth grade pupils placed first with an average score of 594, way above the average of 495. The Philippines ranked 23rd with an average of 358.

In Singapore Math, teachers have to be more creative and make lessons simpler and easier for students to understand.

Fewer and pre-school teachers choose using simple, concrete explanations.

Singapore Math has been part of the VCIS curriculum since 2005.

VCIS was founded in 2000 by the Victory Christian Fellowship (VCF). It provides preschool and high school education with emphasis on Christian character, academic excellence and leadership development.

VCIS is at 109 Robinson Circle Capitolio Brgy. Jordan Drive, Pasig City. Log on to www.victoryschoolsinternational.ph.

Seminar on best practices, lender protection

A SEMINAR-SERIES OF PRACTICES in Private Lenders in Credit Transactions will be held June 18 at the Peninsula Manila, Makati City.

Accredited by the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education, the seminar-workshop presents and practitioners who will talk about the right approaches, best strategies and preventive and remedial actions in handling various credit transactions ranging from secured to unsecured, including mortgages of real estate, guarantees, letters of credit, etc.

Lecturers include lawyer Rafael A. Mendoza, managing partner and former head of the banking department of Sycip Salazar Hernandez and Gatmaitan. Here is another by on credit transactions and has written two books on commercial law and numerous legal articles. He has been cited as Commissioner's Legal Media Group's "Leader in the Industry" in the banking practice. He is a member of the New York bar and president-elect of the Inter-Pacific Bar Association.

Another speaker is lawyer Felicia Kim T. Pedrajas-Ilao, a partner in SyCip Salazar Hernandez and Gatmaitan. She is a trial practitioner and has a master of laws degree from Harvard Law School.

Call (02) 5421148 or 68 or e-mail fpilao@sgv.ph.

WWII true stories contest winner

Angel of mercy

By Bobbit Andrea S. Moreno

(Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from the story that won the consolation prize in the PLA-Philippine Veterans Bank 2010 World War II True Stories Contest. Ms Moreno is an incoming second year high school student at Philippine Women's University.)

THE DELUGE FOLLOWED HEAVEN, as one time or another, a teacher, a civic leader, a diplomat and a mentor. She is also the founder of the world famous and award winning Benjamin Philippine Tuason Co. But very few people know that she was an angel of mercy during World War II.

World War II came to data following the bombing by the Japanese of Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941. With the United States losing thousands of men during the unexpected attack, American President Franklin D. Roosevelt called it a day that would "live in infamy."

Ms Benitez said the Japanese who occupied the country next marched. That was the classic reason she decided to join the war effort on all the key concentrators.

She could have left the country. Given the social standing of her parents, it would not have been impossible for her to find a place where she would be safe and remain unaffected by the war.

But she chose to stay and help. The call to duty was clear.

The Japanese did not occupies other the 214 Islands of the Philippines, of which she was constituted chair, or the Philippine Red Cross. Ms Benitez spearheaded the formation of the Volunteer Social Aid Committee (VSAC), better known as the Civilian Emergency Administration work among prisoners of war (POWs).

The VSAC consisted of women in their early 20s who helped when and where they were needed. It did not matter to them if they had to travel long distances and were exposed to danger.

They brought food, medicines and other essential supplies to prison camps and helped sick prisoners. They also brought news and information to the prisoners about their families and loved ones, and vice versa.

One of VSAC's projects was the "green brigade," an ingenious way to enable prisoners to see members of their families waiting outside prison camps.

Information was passed on from person

PHILIPPINE Veterans Bank president Ricardo Bautista, teacher-coach Editha E. Cola and Moreno

to person allowing specific individuals to join the brigade purportedly to collect grass leaves. Instead, the prisoners spent precious moments with visiting loved ones at shameless VSAC put up outside camps.

When the work load increased, VSAC members sought out the POWs guess knows that field staff had already gathered. The POWs would show the Japanese guards the leaves as proof they did what they were supposed to. The leaves were boiled and used as medicine, especially to cure diarrhea and dysentery.

"There was always danger," she said. "But we were young; we didn't give much importance in the threat from those actions of foreigners. When there is service, we don't think of ourselves, we think of helping the people who are less fortunate than us."

VSAC was considered one of the best groups in the Field. It had vast service and connections. The Maritime shipping company, for instance, gave the group permission to use its ships and provided the goods they required.

VSAC conducted research on other ways to help the prisoners. Led by Dr. Leo Oliveros-Bolado, head of the PVH1 laboratory, the VSAC distilled sugar from acacia pods and used it in substitute juice, which they brought to the prison camps. Ms Benitez said no sugar was available then as the Japanese had gotten all the supplies.

The group also had something more and workers did not have—transportation. The Japanese confiscated cars and other motorized vehicles, as well as gasoline supplies.

VSAC used a charcoal-powered motor vehicle assigned to Ms Benitez's father when the Japanese appointed head of the National Coconut Corp.

VSAC members used the vehicle to go to the DOST campus in San Fernando and Calumpit (now City) Intact. The women's work included smuggling letters to the imprisoned soldiers. While some members carried out their "mission," the others distracted the Japanese guards, presenting them with gifts like bottles of wine and engaging them in conversation.

But there were always risks to be faced.

One time, they visited Gen. Vicente Lim, a prisoner of war, in his Benitez's cognizance. Lim, she were beyond the boundary set for visitors. Before she knew it, a Japanese guard was poking her back with a bayonet while talking rapidly in his language.

She was not aware of the rules because younger members of her team were previously reprimanded. The other VSAC women quickly intervened and explained that Ms Benitez was their chief. Fortunately, the Japanese sentry was appeased.

Although many things happened during the Japanese occupation, it was after the enemy had surrendered that the Girls in Blue found something that would give them quite a shock.

One of the Japanese officers who surrendered said were taken prisoners said, as he passed the women, "We knew what you were doing." The officer told the group they did not make any move to stop the women. This proved to the VSAC there was good in everyone, even the enemy.

After the war, VSAC received a range of recognitions. Several people they had helped wanted to give them back. But the women refused to receive any compensation. They wanted nothing in return for the service they rendered. Being able to do what they had to was reward enough, as far as they were concerned.

Ms Benitez has this message for the youth of today:

"You never know who will become your friend and your enemy so be kind to everyone and they'll remember you for your kindness.

"Love your country. Do what you can to make your people strong, and create a nation that's worth defending to the very end."

TO BETRODUCE Century Bangus with a bang, this company dons Pink Pierrot to underscore its healthy and wholesome image.

Look who's cooking

THE FOODIE CATCH OF THE day weren't a restaurant quite a round to the kitchen of Culinary Colleges in Global City. To be more precise, it was inside the fresh confi.

Head chefs Pinky Pascual practice the school's kitchen for a short demonstration of how to prepare Pasta ng Hiwa Oliv topped with Century Boneless Bangus Belly.

The cooking demo marked the media launch of Century Canning Corp.'s latest foray, canned bangus, which comes in three variants: Hilot, Bonus and chorizo. Growth in seafood cans in Southeast Mindanao, Century Bangus is now in the market as pulutan, spag, with tomato or Spanish style sauce, and Belly Bonus, marinated or marinated boneless belly.

Pascual, whose Hubris Foundation has some 30 scholars, mostly from the indigenous communities, said he had taken undergraduate units at Pasadena Community College and the University of Santo Tomas but had not finished college. His foundation pays for each scholar's education from first grade to college.

The media-attended event used be hoped to go back to college some day for the pastry chef. Philippine brands like Century which served an excellent buffet of bangus dishes at the lunch it hosted after the cooking demo.

CHEF for the day Pascual tries boneless belly, which is available in frozen food counters.

SCOOPING out boiled pasta to cook in olive oil, butter and garlic for a quick dish of Pasta Aglio e Olio.

A science museum for and by Filipinos

By Stephen Marvin A. Padilla
Contributor

THE PHILIPPINES MAY soon have its very first world-class science museum.

The Bonifacio Art Foundation Inc. (BAF) has unveiled plans for The Mind Museum (TMM), an institution that will be an interactive learning center for science concepts in the country's multicultural and science education.

The TMM is designed to be a learning facility and not an entertainment center or video arcade.

Construction is scheduled this year for the P1 billion project at an 8,000-square-meter site in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City. It will be right across from the future ari-ari Shangri-La Hotel and the Philippine Stock Exchange.

TMM is targeted to open end of 2011.

Manny Villar II, TMM managing director, says the Philippines is the only major country without such a museum. "And yet there is overwhelming evidence that a country's capabilities in science and technology are directly related to economic growth," he says.

In 2005, the Philippines ranked 42nd at the high-level among 45 countries in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

Science & development

BAF has raised so far P9.12 million from 31 big donors, in addition to its own P300 million input. This means some 68 percent of the financial target has been met.

Sponsors include ABS-CBN, Ayannimo, Ayala Foundation Inc., Ayala Land, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Bantam, Bank of Commerce, Del Monte, Drift (Gopa Dissertation), Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., Globe Telecom, Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp., IMI Energy of Cos., JPMorgan Chase and Co., Lamoiyan Corp., Malampaya Consortium, Manila Water Corp., National Book Store, Nutritech Inc., Pasay, SC Johnson & Son, Philippine Shell, Sony, Sony Ericsson, St. Luke's Medical Center, Tan Yan Kee Foundation, Timancon, Uenco Point, and the families of Aurelio S. Campos Jr., Mariano R. Tan, and Drs. Rolando and Regina Beatrice Pinto.

THE TECHNOLOGY gallery will be one of five galleries of The Mind Museum, which is expected to open sometime in 2011.

To meet the full funding requirement, BAF is calling on the Philippine people to be part of the project through donations.

"We want this (TMM) to be the project of as many people who want and can be part of it, so that it becomes a project of the Filipinos, for the Filipinos, by the Filipinos," says Villar.

To participate, visit www.themindmuseum.org and click on the Help Build It page or the Donate by Lighting a Bulb page.

Get a star

A donor can give P1,000 or P5,000 for the first virtual exhibit: "Light Up a Star at the Mind Museum." A P5,000 donation will light a star, while a P1,000 donation will lend a constellation on TMM's website.

Sponsorship can be done online via credit card and, from thoroughly-renovated teller machine (ATM) or bank transfer.

The online campaign hopes to raise P2 million to help build the right side of the Universe Gallery.

A donor will receive an electronic certificate of donation and a post on his or her Facebook wall, if he or she has one. Donor' names will appear beside their chosen stars or constellations and on a donors' marker in the Universe Gallery.

Three virtual exhibits are scheduled for the coming weeks to raise funds for other galleries. Next in line is the "Chemical Orchestra" exhibit where donors can sponsor elements and their properties.

Alex Linmoan, head of the online fund-raising campaign, says TMM is not just the project of big companies. "We would like it to be the result of the combined efforts of you, of me, of our friends, of our families, of everyone who believes in the power of imagination and creativity."

The museum is expected to feature some 250 interactive exhibits in five galleries, as well as an outdoor area called Science in the Park. The galleries are to be named Brain, Earth, Life, Universe and Technology.

Museum curator Maria Isabel Garcia says a human-like robot imported from Japan will greet visitors and introduce them to TMM.

A special hall, the Hall of Philippine Science, will showcase Filipino ingenuity and innovation in science and technology.

Garcia says, with all the offerings of the museum, visitors will have "a unique experience (that) never leaves you entirely."

The TMM project currently involves 58 designers, four architects, 23 scientists, 10 engineers, 12 specialty exhibit advisors, three sets of multimedia programmers and seven resident interns. The BAF also partnered with international consultancy from the National Geographic and Singapore Science Centers.

New gadget turns kids into wordwise learners

YOUNG MOM GISO NGO IS A hands-on mom, never mind that for almost 17 years she has been running a business.

She has three energetic kids: Andrey, 17; Ariel, 14; and Andrea, 12. All three engage in competitive sports. In fact, Ariel races for the youth national team in swimming.

With the demands of work as well as home, especially on one hand, and the kids' extracurricular activities on the other, Ngo needs all the help she can get.

She has found a handy ally in a gadget called the Franklin MWD 566 Electronic Dictionary and Thesaurus, which, she says, has given her kids a learning advantage.

"With the E-dictionary, my children can study more independently and do not need tutors," says Ngo. "Because of its features, doing school reports or reading difficult books by a known do not stay a matter. The kids can easily get help with word meanings and correct spelling."

The Franklin E-dictionary has over 500,000 definitions and 500,000 synonyms (spelling words) in its database, including new words coined during technological era.

Ngo loves another unique feature of the Franklin E-dictionary which is its phonetic spell correction.

"The feature is useful especially for my youngest child, Andrea. She's unfamiliar with some words the circumstances in school, all she has to do is type the word according to how she hears it and the correct spelling appears instantly," Ngo says.

Ngo points out that the E-dictionary is not an alternative to kids who usually use online dictionaries.

Marie herself uses the Franklin E-dictionary. "The features some very handy especially when I draft business documents, such as sales reports, letters, etc."

The Franklin E-Dictionary is available at National Book Store outlets. For more information, call Infotext at 721-1446 or Inf. 9611-8973/8963.

GIZMO